

**Bond University**

## **DOCTORAL THESIS**

**The institutionalisation of sustainability in event management: a case study of the diffusion of ISO 20121 at the Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games.**

Bakos, Andrew

*Award date:*  
2020

[Link to publication](#)

### **General rights**

Copyright and moral rights for the publications made accessible in the public portal are retained by the authors and/or other copyright owners and it is a condition of accessing publications that users recognise and abide by the legal requirements associated with these rights.

- Users may download and print one copy of any publication from the public portal for the purpose of private study or research.
- You may not further distribute the material or use it for any profit-making activity or commercial gain
- You may freely distribute the URL identifying the publication in the public portal.



***The institutionalisation of sustainability in event management: A case study  
of the diffusion of ISO 20121 at the Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth  
Games***

**Andrew Robert Bakos**

Submitted in total fulfilment of the requirement of the degree  
of Doctor of Philosophy

August 2019

Bond Business School

Associate Professor Danny O'Brien and Assistant Professor Lisa Gowthorp

## Abstract

Sustainability has become an increasingly significant issue in the events industry, especially within the context of planning and staging major sporting events. The release of the International Organizations for Standardization (ISO) 20121: 2012 – *Event sustainability management systems* exemplifies an industry-specific innovation as a solution to the growing societal demands for the production of sustainable events. Empirical analysis of management standards has predominately focused on the global diffusion of previous ISO standards. Scholars have called for more research on the early days of diffusion whereby standards are diffused through a few number of key actors. Given the relatively novel quality of ISO 20121, there is a current lack of understanding on how these standards are diffused. This gap in the literature was addressed by analysing and evaluating the diffusion of ISO 20121 within the host city of the 2018 Commonwealth Games.

This study follows a single-case study qualitative research design that relied on interview data, participant observations, and organisational documents. Data collection occurred from September 2015 to November 2018, which included 32 semi-structured interviews with event and sustainability professionals. The research was carried out in a three-phase research design that followed the researcher's conceptualisation of the Field-Configuring Event Innovation Diffusion Model. The first phase analyses the GC2018 field in which ISO 20121 had potential to be diffused in the local events industry to identify the key actors involved in the diffusion of the standard. It argued that GC2018 qualified as an interstitial issue field, whereby the field emerged at the intersection of multiple exchange fields. The second phase examines how key diffusion actors disseminated ISO 20121 within the GC2018 field. Findings illustrate an uncoordinated effort in the diffusion of ISO 20121 with most of the diffusion activities being done by the organising committee for the 2018 Commonwealth Games (GOLDOC). The third and final phase of the research analyses the perception of potential adopters through Rogers (2003) Innovation-Decision Process. Subsequently, there was only few instances of the standard's adoption within the local events industry of GC2018.

The study has significant implications from a theoretical perspective. First, it addresses calls for empirical sport and event research (Mallen, 2018; Lockstone-Binney, 2019) in the area of sport and event sustainability standards (Nguyen, 2018). Within organisational studies, the research findings provide a better understanding of the link between the processes of diffusion and institutionalisation through an empirical analysis using Stamm's (2019) diffusion work perspective.

From a practical perspective, the findings from this research are important as the implementation of the standard has become a requirement for future Organizing Committees (OCs) of the Olympic Games. Yet, outside of major events, the implementation of the standard has been lacklustre to date. The findings from this research provide insight as to why the sport and event industry has not accepted the ISO 20121 standard as well as expected and how to increase awareness and adoption of the standard through major and mega-events. A network approach for ISO 20121 small to medium-sized enterprise (SME) adoption is presented as an approach for future mega-events to positively impact the diffusion and subsequent adoption of the standard.

**Keywords:**

Sustainability; Event Management; Sustainability Standards; ISO20121; Diffusion Work; Institutional Work; Organisational Fields.

## **Declaration**

This thesis is submitted to Bond University in fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

This thesis represents my own original work towards this research degree and contains no material that has previously been submitted for a degree or diploma at this University or any other institution, except where due acknowledgement is made.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Andrew Bakos

### **Ethics Declaration**

The research associated with this thesis received ethics approval from the Bond University Human Research Ethics Committee. Ethics application number 0000015268, approved on 07/31/2015.

## **Acknowledgements**

I would like to take the opportunity to acknowledge and extend my gratitude to a number of individuals who helped make the completion of this thesis possible.

I wish to thank Dr. Danny O'Brien, my principal supervisor. Your expertise, guidance and most of all patience, was second to none and I could not have asked for a better supervisor. Thank you to Dr. Lisa Gowthorp, my associate supervisor. You kept me on task, encouraged me, and provided valuable feedback throughout my candidature. You both went above and beyond your responsibilities on numerous occasions to ensure I completed this thesis and I am truly grateful for the support you provided me.

I also wish to thank Bond University for providing me with the support and tools that made this research possible. My Phd Candidature started within Faculty of Health Sciences and Medicine and ended up in the Faculty of Business at Bond University. Thank you to all the staff and fellow HDR students who have been there to support me on this PhD journey. Special thanks to Jason Limnios. Not having the luxury of other Sport Management HDR students in the office to share thoughts and ask questions was unfortunate. However, you were always there to bounce ideas off of and provide your insight (not to mention a place to sleep the last few months).

I wish to express my gratitude to my family and my partner Ayla. Without the love and support of my parents, the completion of this PhD would not have been possible. You always believed in me and pushed me to conquer things I thought were impossible for me. I share this achievement with the both of you. Thank you, Joe, for always taking the time to answer my calls and providing me with your support. Finally, thank you Ayla. I am so appreciative for your endless encouragement, proofreading, and long phone calls that pushed me forward.

There are many others who may not be mentioned here by name, but please know I am grateful for all of your love and support.

## Table of Contents

<b>Chapter One: Introduction.....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Research Background .....	1
1.2 Theoretical Approach to this Study .....	2
1.3 Research Purpose and Rationale.....	4
1.4 Research Aims and Objectives .....	5
1.5 Thesis Outline.....	5
<b>Chapter Two: Literature Review .....</b>	<b>7</b>
2.1 Introduction .....	7
2.2 Event Studies .....	7
2.2.1 <i>Planned Events</i> .....	10
2.2.2 <i>A Commonwealth Games Overview</i> .....	13
2.2.3 <i>Mega-Event Research</i> .....	14
2.2.4 <i>Defining Sustainability: The Sport and Event Context</i> .....	16
2.2.5 <i>Sustainability Research in Sport Management and Event Studies</i> .....	19
2.3. Standards .....	22
2.3.1 <i>The Types of Standards: Process vs. Outcome-Based</i> .....	23
2.3.2 <i>A Short History of ISO Management System Standards</i> .....	24
2.3.3 <i>The Creation of ISO 20121: Event Sustainability Management Systems</i> ..	26
2.4 Institutional Theory .....	28
2.4.1 <i>Isomorphism</i> .....	29
2.4.2 <i>Organisational Fields</i> .....	29
2.4.3 <i>Institutional Logics</i> .....	31
2.4.4 <i>Institutional Infrastructure</i> .....	32
2.4.5 <i>Institutionalisation and Legitimacy</i> .....	33
2.4.6 <i>Institutional Change</i> .....	34



2.5 Institutional Work.....	35
2.5.1 <i>Creation</i> .....	36
2.5.2 <i>Maintenance</i> .....	36
2.5.3 <i>Disruption</i> .....	37
2.6 Field-Configuring Events (FCEs).....	37
2.7 Institutional Theory in Sport Management.....	38
2.8 Institutional Theory on Management System Standards .....	40
2.9 Diffusion of Innovation Theory.....	43
2.9.1 <i>The Innovation</i> .....	43
2.9.2 <i>Communication Channels</i> .....	44
2.9.3 <i>Time</i> .....	45
2.9.4 <i>The Social System</i> .....	46
2.10 Management System Standards and Events: A Diffusion Perspective .....	47
2.11 Diffusion Theory in Sport Studies.....	48
2.12 Diffusion Work.....	50
2.13 Diffusion and Institutionalisation of Event Sustainability Standards.....	51
2.14 Gaps in Knowledge .....	52
2.15 Research Aims and Objectives .....	54
2.16 Research Questions .....	55
2.17 Chapter Summary .....	55
<b>Chapter Three: Methodology and Research Methods.....</b>	<b>57</b>
3.1 Introduction .....	57
3.2 Research Methodology .....	57
3.2.1 <i>Positivism</i> .....	58
3.2.2 <i>Post-Positivism</i> .....	59
3.2.3 <i>Critical Theory</i> .....	59
3.2.4 <i>Participatory</i> .....	59

3.2.5 <i>Constructivism</i> .....	60
3.3 Research Method .....	61
3.3.1 <i>Qualitative Research</i> .....	62
3.3.2 <i>Thematising the Study</i> .....	62
3.3.3 <i>Selecting the Case</i> .....	63
3.3.4 <i>Overview of the Case Study: GC2018</i> .....	64
<b>3.4. Research Design</b> .....	66
3.5. Data Collection .....	66
3.5.1 <i>Semi-Structured Interviews</i> .....	66
3.5.2 <i>Participant Observation</i> .....	69
3.5.3 <i>Document Analysis</i> .....	70
3.6 Data Analysis .....	71
3.7 Trustworthiness .....	73
3.8 Ethical Considerations .....	74
3.9 Chapter Summary .....	75
<b>Chapter Four: Key Diffusion Actors Involved in the Pre-Institutionalisation of ISO 20121</b> .....	77
4.1 Introduction .....	77
4.2 The Commonwealth Games: Defining the Field .....	77
4.2.1 <i>Purpose and Focus of the GC2018 Field</i> .....	79
4.2.2 <i>GC2018 Field-level Boundaries</i> .....	81
4.3 Field Conditions for the Diffusion of ISO 20121 .....	90
4.4 ISO 20121 and Diffusion Actors .....	95
4.4.3 <i>GCCBC</i> .....	100
4.4.3 <i>GOLDOC</i> .....	100
4.4.4 <i>Governments</i> .....	101
4.4.5 <i>Consultants</i> .....	103

4.4.6 <i>Industry and Professional Associations/Auditors</i> .....	105
4.4.7 <i>Universities and Researchers</i> .....	106
4.5 Chapter Summary .....	108
<b>Chapter Five: Examining the Diffusion Work of Key Actors</b> .....	<b>111</b>
5.1 Introduction .....	111
5.2 Indicators of Diffusion Work for ISO 20121 .....	112
5.3 CGF .....	113
5.3.1 <i>Candidate City Manual</i> .....	113
5.3.2 <i>Commonwealth Games Knowledge Management Programme</i> .....	114
5.3.3 <i>Transformation 2022</i> .....	116
5.4 GCCBC .....	118
5.5 GOLDOC .....	120
5.5.1 <i>GOLDOC Sustainability Documents</i> .....	120
5.5.2 <i>SEWG</i> .....	123
5.5.3 <i>Annual Sustainability Forums</i> .....	125
5.5.4 <i>Human Rights Policy</i> .....	127
5.6 Governments .....	128
5.6.1 <i>Queensland State Government</i> .....	129
5.6.2 <i>GCCC</i> .....	129
5.7 Consultants .....	132
5.7.1 <i>Co-designers</i> .....	132
5.7.2 <i>Interpreters</i> .....	133
5.7.3 <i>Promoters</i> .....	134
5.8 Universities and Researchers .....	135
5.9 Explaining the diffusion work of key actors for a voluntary sustainability standard within an organisational field .....	139
5.9.1 <i>Intentionality and Effort</i> .....	139

5.9.2 <i>Diffusion Work</i> .....	140
5.10 Chapter Summary .....	141
<b>Chapter Six: The Innovation-Decision Process (IDP) and Factors that Influence the Diffusion of ISO 20121 .....</b>	<b>143</b>
6.1 Introduction .....	143
6.2 The Innovation Decision Process Model .....	144
6.3 Knowledge Stage .....	145
6.3.1 <i>Situational Factors</i> .....	146
6.3.2 <i>Acquaintance with ISO 20121</i> .....	146
6.3.3 <i>Comprehension of ISO 20121</i> .....	148
6.4 Persuasion Stage .....	154
6.4.1 <i>Relative Advantage</i> .....	155
6.4.2 <i>Compatibility</i> .....	156
6.4.3 <i>Trialability</i> .....	157
6.4.4 <i>Ease of adoption (level of complexity)</i> .....	158
6.4.5 <i>Observability</i> .....	159
6.5 Decision Stage .....	160
6.6 Implementation .....	161
6.6.1 <i>Reinvention</i> .....	162
6.7 Summary of Findings .....	163
6.7.1 <i>Coordinating Diffusion Work for the Adoption of ISO 20121 in an Event Organisational Field</i> .....	165
6.8 Chapter Summary .....	173
<b>Chapter Seven: Conclusion .....</b>	<b>175</b>
7.1 Introduction .....	175
7.2 Overview of the Study and Key Research Findings .....	175

7.2.1 Who are the key actors involved in the pre-institutionalisation of ISO 20121?.....	176
7.2.2 How do key actors diffuse a management system standard within an organisational field? .....	177
7.2.3 How do perceptions of potential adopters towards the standard affect their adoption decision? .....	178
7.3 Theoretical Implications .....	178
7.3.1 Event Studies .....	179
7.3.2 Sport Management .....	180
7.3.3 Organisational Studies.....	180
7.4 Practical Implications .....	181
7.4.1 An Applied Example of the Diffusion Model for the Adoption of ISO 20121: South-East Queensland's Proposed Bid for the 2032 Olympic Games	182
7.5 Limitations of the Research.....	184
7.6 Recommendations for Future Research.....	184
<b>References.....</b>	<b>187</b>
<b>Appendices .....</b>	<b>207</b>
Appendix A: Framework of ISO 20121 .....	207
Appendix B: Participant Information Document .....	208
Appendix C: Participant Consent Form .....	210
Appendix D: Semi-Structured Interview Guide .....	213
Appendix E: Final Coding Template .....	215

## **List of Tables**

Table 2.1:	Categorisation of Events Based on Scale
Table 2.2:	Dimensions of Institutional Infrastructure
Table 3.1:	Interview Respondents
Table 3.2:	Document Types and Sources
Table 5.1:	GOLDOC's Nine Sustainability Priorities
Table 6.1:	Source of respondent acquaintance with ISO 20121
Table 6.2:	Descriptions of ISO 20121 in academic literature

## **List of Figures**

- Figure 2.1: Innovation Decision Process
- Figure 2.2: Four Modes of Standard Diffusion
- Figure 2.3: Field-Configuring Event Innovation-Diffusion Model
- Figure 4.1: GC2018 Field Level Boundaries
- Figure 4.2: Emergence of the GC2018 interstitial issue field
- Figure 4.3: Diffusion actor groups of ISO20121
- Figure 4.4: Timeline of key diffusion actor's entry in the GC2018 Field
- Figure 5.1: ISO20121 diffusion work within the GC2018 Field
- Figure 5.2: GC2018 Event Lifecycle
- Figure 6.1: Innovation-Decision Process
- Figure 6.2: ISO20121 approach to Sustainability
- Figure 6.3: Summary of potential adopter's experience with ISO20121
- Figure 6.4: ISO 20121 Diffusion Failure
- Figure 6.5: Network Approach for ISO20121 SME Adoption

## **Abbreviations**

Commonwealth Games	CWG
Commonwealth Games Federation	CGF
Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games	GC2018
Gold Coast Commonwealth Games Bid	GCCBC
Gold Coast City Council	GCCC
Gold Coast Convention and Exhibition Centre	GCCEC
Gold Coast Commonwealth Games Bid Corporation	GOLDOC
International Olympic Committee	IOC
International Organization for Standardization	ISO
Functional Area	FA
Field-Configuring Event	FCE
Innovation-Decision Process	IDP
Sustainable Events Working Group	SEWG
Small to medium-sized enterprise	SME
Template Analysis	TA



# Spot the Ball

## **Chapter One: Introduction**

### **1.1 Research Background**

The staging of mega-events has become an important catalyst for host cities seeking to enhance their global reputation, promote social cohesion, and (re-) develop infrastructure (Mair & Whitford, 2013). Despite the prospect of these attractive benefits, the unsustainable growth of large-scale events has resulted in greater public scrutiny over the significant resources required to stage them (Getz, 2017). Following the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games, sustainability has become an integral part of sport and event management. However, sustainability remains an underdeveloped area in sport management and event studies (Lockstone-Binney, 2018; Mair & Whitford, 2013; Mallen, 2018; Stevens, 2018).

In response to growing concerns over the management of sport and events, the last decade has seen the emergence of numerous voluntary industry-specific sustainability standards. One of these standards, the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) 20121: 2012 – Event sustainability management systems, is gaining increasing attention as major events are progressively incorporating this standard into their management processes. Standards are “a rule for common and voluntary use, decided by one or several people or organisations” (Brunsson, Rasche, & Seidl, 2012, p. 617). As the world’s largest standard-setting body, the main purpose of ISO is to assist the international exchange of goods and services in order to enhance technological, economic, and scientific activity throughout the world (Wall, Weersink, & Swanton, 2001).

ISO 20121 specifies the requirements of an event sustainability management system and offers guidance for use to support the delivery of sustainable events for its adopters. This framework is as relevant for small conference meetings as it is for mega sport events like the Olympic Games (Jones, 2017). ISO 20121 takes a management system approach and requires adopters to identify key sustainability issues related to their events such as venue selection, operating procedures, supply chain management, procurement, communications, and transport.

For the Commonwealth Games Movement, the stakes to produce sustainable events have never been higher. The relevance of the Commonwealth Games has been questioned due to their inability to attract world-class athletes and significant live and television spectator audiences (Osborne, Sherry & Nicholson, 2016; Keech, 2018). Although the Commonwealth Games has been labelled “a poor stepchild” to the Olympic Games

(Foreman & Parent, 2008, p. 230), uncertainty over the future of the event reached a critical point following the Delhi 2010 Commonwealth Games, which saw significant damage to the Commonwealth Games reputation due to unprecedented inefficiency in the event's planning, organising, and financial mismanagement (Keech, 2018; Majumdar, 2012). In response to the growing crisis of the Commonwealth Games, in 2015, the CGF released its new strategic plan titled Transformation 2022, which aimed to ensure that the scope and scale of future Commonwealth Games was affordable for bidding cities (Keech, 2018). To realise the ambitious strategic plan, one of the six key actions required for the Commonwealth Games Movement was to "... share expertise and champion best practice in the fields of social, economic, cultural and environmental impact to nurture sustainable Games legacy for host cities/nations and their local communities." (CGF, 2015b, p. 24-25). At the most recent iteration of the event in the City of Gold Coast in 2018, in an effort to build a sustainable Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games (GC2018), the Gold Coast Commonwealth Games Corporation (GOLDOC) implemented a sustainable events management system that aligned to ISO 20121.

Due to the novelty of these standards, there is very little understanding of how they diffuse over time, and more importantly, if they become institutionalised within the focal sport and event sectors. Therefore, this thesis provides an institutional perspective to provide a better understanding of the factors that enable or hamper the diffusion of sustainability standards in host communities.

## **1.2 Theoretical Approach to this Study**

The theoretical approach for this research combines perspectives from institutional theory and diffusion of innovation theory. These are the two most predominant theoretical approaches to research on management system standards (Tuczek, Castka, & Wakolbinger, 2018), and thereby, provide a solid basis for early research on event sustainability standards. Institutions have been described as, "... more-or-less taken-for-granted repetitive social behaviour that is underpinned by normative systems and cognitive understanding that give meaning to social exchange and thus enable self-reproducing social order" (Greenwood, Oliver, Sahlin-Andersson, & Suddaby, 2008, p. 4-5). Central to the study is also the concept of the organisational field. DiMaggio and Powell defined the organisational field as, "... those organisations that, in the aggregate, constitute a recognised area of institutional life:

key suppliers, resource and product consumers, regulatory agencies and other organisations that produce similar services or products” (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983, p. 143).

The organisational field is the most essential concept within institutional theory to understand institutional processes (Scott, 2014). Yet, despite its popularity within the sport management literature, it remains a significantly underdeveloped area of research (Washington & Patterson, 2011). Even more undeveloped in the sport and event management literature, is the notion of a “field configuring event” (FCE), or what Meyer, Gaba & Colwell (2005) referred to as, “settings where people from diverse social organizations assemble temporarily, with the conscious, collective intent to construct an organizational field” (p.467).

Meanwhile, institutionalisation is concerned with the processes by which “...structures, schemas, rules, and routines become established” (Scott, 2004, p. 408). This process of establishing schemas, rules, routines requires work by relevant actors – a process referred to as “institutional work.” As Lawrence and Suddaby (2006) posited, “... adopting a practice perspective on institutions points research and theory toward understanding the knowledgeable, creative and practical work of individual and collective actors aimed at creating, maintaining, and transforming institutions” (p. 219).

For a management standard to be institutionalised, however, Stamm (2019) argued that it must first be effectively diffused throughout the focal organisational field. The concept of “diffusion” refers to, “the process in which an innovation is communicated through certain channels over time among the members of a social system” (Rogers, 2003, p. 11). An institutional work perspective on standard diffusion in the event context can provide an important lens to help understand the actions and impacts of agency-infused actors (O’Brien & Slack, 2005) who make strategic choices, and thereby create institutional pressures, around decisions to adopt (or not) particular standards. Therefore, this research utilised the concepts mentioned above to develop understanding of innovation-diffusion of ISO 20121 through a field-configuring event of “...extraordinary size and complexity” (Thiel, 2015, p. 237) – the Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games.

### **1.3 Research Purpose and Rationale**

Scholars have called for more extensive research that focuses on second-order mega events such as the Commonwealth Games (Black, 2008; Roche, 2017). These events generate global interest and require significant resources, but do not have the global reach as the Olympic Games and FIFA World Cup (Cornelissen, 2004). Furthermore, an important topic of research within this area is sustainability (Lockstone-Binney & Ong, 2019). Indeed, despite the prominence of ISO management standards in society and as a topical research area in mainstream management literature, and calls to address sustainability within event studies (Lockstone-Binney & Ong, 2019; Mair & Whitford, 2013), there is little empirical research on ISO 20121 within both event and sport management literatures. Equally, there is little formal knowledge about the early days of diffusion whereby an innovation, or sustainability standard in the case of this research, begins its trajectory towards institutionalisation. Getz (2019) posited that compliance with standards such as ISO 20121 must become commonplace within event management for the institutionalisation of sustainability to be realised; however, the adoption of sustainability standards remains largely optional for most events. The overall aim of this thesis was to contribute to the practical understanding of the role management standards play in the process of institutionalising sustainability within planned events. This was achieved through a qualitative single-case study method focused on field-level diffusion of ISO 20121 at GC2018.

This study examined how a transnational event sustainability standard diffused through the GC2018 organisational field. The overarching research question addressed was: What role does diffusion play in the institutionalisation process of an innovation within an organisational field? A further three sub-research questions were developed to guide the study and are presented in Chapter Two.

The major original contribution of this research to the sport and event studies literature is the Field-Configuring Event Innovation Diffusion Model. This model combines previously disparate work within institutional theory and diffusion theory within a mega-event context and was utilised by the researcher to examine the diffusion of ISO 20121 within the GC2018 organisational field. Another important contribution of this research is the integration of a network approach for ISO 20121 adoption that provides a method in which adoption among SMEs can be increased.

## **1.4 Research Aims and Objectives**

The research aims for this thesis were driven by an aspiration to develop both conceptual and practical understanding of the emerging phenomenon of sustainable event management. ISO 20121 is a transnational standard that presents a systematic approach to the adoption of sustainable event management practices. It seeks to provide a normative framework in which sustainability can be imbedded into the management of event organisations. This standard was also the foundational tool used by GOLDOC to build a sustainability legacy from GC2018. The main aim of this thesis was to analyse how actors went about disseminating the standard within the events industry of the GC2018 host region, and to determine the level to which the sustainable event management practices inherent to the standard were thus institutionalised in the Gold Coast event sector. While the traditional approach to institutional research primarily explores why change occurs, the primary focus of this thesis was to examine how standards diffuse. As such, the objectives of this thesis were:

- To explore understandings of how sustainable practices are diffused within an event and if they extend beyond the event;
- To detail how diffusion actors impact, or are impacted by, their position in the field;
- To examine the relationships between heterogeneous actor groups; and,
- To explore the extent to which institutional arrangements can be altered in the planning phase of a mega-event.

## **1.5 Thesis Outline**

This thesis consists of seven chapters. Following this chapter, Chapter Two presents a review of the literature relevant to the research on the topics of mega-event studies, sustainability and event management, and management system standards. The chapter also provides an overview of institutional theory and diffusion of innovation theory, and their use within research relevant to this thesis. Chapter Two concludes with the research objectives, aims, and questions that guide this thesis, as well as the theoretical approach to the study. Chapter Three presents the methodological approach of this thesis, and is comprised of the philosophical assumptions and beliefs that underpin this research, the context of the case study, and research methods. Chapter Four presents the results and

discussion for the first phase of the research. This chapter provides a detailed analysis of the GC2018 field and identifies the key ISO 20121 diffusion actors. Chapter Five presents the results and discussion for the second phase of the research, and examines the diffusion work carried out by the key actors. Chapter Six presents the results and discussion for the third phase of the research, and analyses the outcomes of the diffusion work carried out by key actors through the perceptions of potential adopters in the GC2018 field towards ISO 20121. Chapter Seven concludes the thesis by providing a summary of the key research findings, the contributions made by this thesis to the knowledge of sport and event management, and the application of the theoretical perspectives in a mega-event context. The chapter concludes with the practical implications of the research, its limitations, and future research directions.

This introductory chapter has provided an overview of this thesis, highlighting: the background to the research; the research objectives and questions; the theoretical framework that underpins the study; the importance of the research; and an outline of the thesis structure. The next chapter will now present a review of the literature relevant to the research.

## **Chapter Two: Literature Review**

### **2.1 Introduction**

The aim of this chapter is twofold: first, to present the relevant research that underpins this study; and second, to identify gaps in our field's knowledge that are addressed by this research. This chapter presents some of the key literature in the areas of event studies, sport management, and ISO management system standards. It begins with a discussion of event studies as the core phenomenon of the research is the 2018 Gold Coast Commonwealth Games. The chapter proceeds with a discussion of theoretical perspectives from institutional theory and diffusion of innovation theory. Specifically, the theoretical underpinnings of this research were institutional work (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006), the innovation-decision process (Rogers, 2003), and recent conceptualisation of diffusion work (Stamm, 2019). The chapter concludes by highlighting the existing gaps in knowledge, and develops research aims to address these gaps and build new knowledge to extend the fields of event studies and sport management.

### **2.2 Event Studies**

Government recognition of the positive impacts generated through staging planned mega-events, such as the Olympic Games, has increased since the 1980s (Mair & Whitford, 2013). This is reflected in the rapid increase and significance of number of global mega-events worldwide (Mair & Whitford, 2013; Page & Connell, 2012). The globalisation of one-off sporting events can in part be attributed to reduced politicisation of the bidding process in the post-Cold War era (Chappelet & Parent, 2013; Lee, 2013). The effective management of mega-events has emerged as a critical issue, given their intensive use of public resources, including space, funding and infrastructure (Lockstone-Binney & Ong, 2019). In response to this growing demand, universities and colleges globally began to develop certification and degree programmes for the professional field of event management in the mid- to late 1990s focused on the design, production, and management of planned events (Getz, 2008; Harris & Jago, 1999; Hawkins & Goldblatt, 1995). Research fields commonly arise from professional fields, as academics "...need to elevate the status of their work from that of purely applied to something more theoretical" (Getz, 2008, p. 405). Through this ubiquity of planned events and event education, the recognition of a new



academic field in event studies materialised in the early 2000s (Getz, 2000, 2002). Getz (2012c) defined event studies as:

...the academic field devoted to creating knowledge and theory about planned events. Every field requires a unique core phenomenon, and it is the study of all planned events that most obviously distinguishes event studies. This encompasses their planning and management, outcomes, the experience of events and meanings attached to them, and all the dynamic processes shaping events and the reasons why people attend them (p.4).

As the core phenomenon within event studies, planned events are live “...spatial-temporal phenomen[a]...” (Getz, 2008, p. 404) that have specific purposes, and are uniquely designed to generate particular economic, socio-cultural, and/or environmental outcomes (Getz & Page, 2016a). Getz’s (2012a) review of event-related literature identified three major discourses with “...distinct structured line[s] of reasoning, ideas, and approaches to knowledge creation” (p. 36) within event studies:

- (a) a classical discourse, rooted in anthropology and sociology, that considers the roles, importance and effects of planned events in society and culture;
- (b) event tourism, which is focused on how events can contribute to economic development and place marketing, and;
- (c) event management, which concentrates on how to produce and manage events and their organizations (pp. 35-36).

The classical discourse draws on traditional disciplinary approaches, primarily in social sciences, to explain event experiences. This discourse is distinct from the other two as they are instrumentalist; researchers within the event tourism discourse focus on the value of events to the tourism field, while those within the event management discourse apply theory to the practical problems of event management (Baum, Lockstone-Binney, & Robertson, 2013; Getz, 2012b).

Researchers from various academic fields such as leisure, hospitality, and tourism have studied planned events well before Getz (2000, 2002) proposed event studies as a distinct field “...focused on the phenomenon of events in society” (Getz, 2002, p. 13). In the 1980s, event-related research proliferated within the field of tourism (Formica, 1998; Kim, Boo, & Kim, 2013). Subsequently, until the turn of the century, event studies was predominately comprised of applied research focused on economic and financial impact

assessments (Formica, 1998; Kim et al., 2013; Page & Connell, 2012). Similar concern with the status of research within the closely related field of hospitality as an “...intellectual cul-de-sac...” (Lashley, 2007, p. 216) led to calls for broadening the research agenda to include more social science and critical perspectives (Botterill, 2000). Lashley (2004) summed up this mirroring issue within hospitality studies: “...the study of hospitality allows for a general broad spectrum *of* enquiry and the study *for* allows studies that support the management of hospitality” (Lashley, 2004, p. 68).

Getz’s conceptualisation of event studies has been described as “...significant development for the field...” (Mair & Whitford, 2013) (p.7) that has “...served to ignite additional research interest and scholarly pursuit of this growing field of study” (Goldblatt, 2016, p. 308). However, event studies has received criticism from both within and outside of the field (Baum et al., 2013). The lack of event-specific theory development has prevented event studies from realising general recognition as a distinct discipline (Lockstone-Binney & Ong, 2019). Furthermore, the dominance of instrumentalist research has led to a lack of critical examination (Baum et al., 2013) and excessive positive claims (Rojek, 2014).

As a developing field, event studies is “...mostly multi-disciplinary in nature, drawing theory, knowledge, methodologies, and methods from many established disciplines” (Getz & Page, 2016b, p. 614). Lockstone-Binney’s (2018) review of Australian university event doctoral theses abstracts published from 1995-2015 supported Getz’s (2016b) assertion of the multidisciplinary description of the event studies field by finding that “...51% of the theses studied were multidisciplinary in nature” (p. 1054).

The multidisciplinary nature of event studies is evident within the current research as it draws on discourse in sociology (diffusion of innovations), management theory (institutional work), sport event management (mega-events and sustainability), and management system standards to develop event-specific knowledge. The academic field of event studies is of particular interest to this study as the focal point of this research is a planned event. However, as this field encompasses a wide array of planned events, it is important to position the 2018 Gold Coast Commonwealth Games (GC2018) within the world of planned events.

### ***2.2.1 Planned Events***

The Commonwealth Games are a part of the wider events industry that covers a spectrum of planned events ranging from the Olympic Games to weddings. Planned events are generally classified by their size and form. For example, Getz and Page's (2016a) typology includes six main types of planned events based on their purpose and programme: cultural celebration, business and trade, arts and entertainment, sport and recreation, political and state, and private functions. Based on this typology, the Commonwealth Games fits categorically within sports and recreation. However, it can be argued that in reality the Commonwealth Games encompasses all types of planned events. For example, the emerging academic field of sports diplomacy illustrates sport events' political use "...undertaken by sports people on behalf of and in conjunction with their governments" (Murray, 2012, p. 581). In reference to the Commonwealth Games, Dheensaw (1994) posited that no other major sporting event was founded on such historical links, other than the Summer Olympic Games. Sport played a pivotal role during the decolonisation period of the British Empire, aiding in its transformation into the Commonwealth of Nations (Perkin, 1989).

Chappelet and Parent's (2013) typology of sports event is based on three dimensions of the event: for-profit vs. non-profit, mono-sport vs. multi-sport, and recurring vs. one-off. Within their typology, the Commonwealth Games is classified as a 'Multi-Sport Games' as it is a non-profit, multi-sport, one-off event. Multi-Sport Games are commonly owned by ad-hoc sport organisations (Chappelet & Parent, 2013). For example, the Commonwealth Games Federation owns the rights to the Commonwealth Games. Multi-Sport Games range from global events like the Olympic Games to small regional events like the Ontario (Canada) Summer Games.

Several typologies in reference to event scale have been proposed by scholars (Bowdin, Allen, O'Toole, Harris, & McDonnell, 2006; Getz, 2005; Gratton, Dobson, & Shibli, 2000; Hall, 1989; Müller, 2015; Ritchie, 1984). Scale is generally determined by a number of event characteristics such as: financial cost, media reach, economic impacts, the number of participants, venues, and spectators. Early academic interest in event-related research was rooted in tourism in the 1980s, classifications were related to economic impacts generated from events such as job growth and destination image improvements (Getz, 2008). Table 2.1 illustrates Getz's (2005) typology based on scale.

Table 2.1

*Categorisation of Events Based on Scale* (Getz, 2005, pp. 14-18)

Category of Event	Description
Local/Minor	Community events that target a local audience and utilize local volunteers, infrastructure, and services.
Major	Through their scale they attract national and international media coverage, significant domestic and nondomestic visitor numbers, and economic benefits.
Hallmark	Describes an event that possesses such significance, in terms of tradition, attractiveness, quality, or publicity, that the event provides the host venue, community, or destination with a competitive advantage. Over time, the event and destination can become inextricably linked, such as Mardi Gras and New Orleans.
Mega	Yield extraordinarily high levels of tourism, media coverage, prestige, and economic impact for the host community, venue and organization.

The growth and diversification of events has coincided with an increased ambiguity among scholars around which events are mega-events (Müller, 2015; Roche, 2017). For example, the Commonwealth Games has been referred to as both a mega-event (Carlsen & Taylor, 2003) and a major event (Solberg & Preuss, 2007).

The term ‘mega’ is also used as a characterisation of an event’s impact on a host city, as well as its global significance. For instance, Roche (2000) defined mega-events as, “large-scale, cultural (including commercial and sporting) events, which have a dramatic character, mass popular appeal and international significance” (p.1). Yet Getz (2016a) contends that “even a small music festival can have ‘mega’ impacts on a small town” (p. 83). More recently, Müller (2015) classified giga-, mega-, major events based on four measures related to: the number of people who attend, media reach, total cost, and infrastructural development. While this creates a hierarchy among mega-events that can be adjusted in the contemporary period, it only considers outputs generated from events.

Mega-events have also been classified as first-order (i.e. Olympic Games), second-order (i.e. Commonwealth Games), and third-order (i.e. Caribbean Games) (Black, 2008; Cornelissen, 2004). Black (2014) identified three significant similarities between first- and second-mega-events: perceived benefits to the host city in place promotion catalysing major infrastructural projects, place promotion, and national prestige; they are “...typically orchestrated by arms-length, time-limited, public-private organizing committees, overseen by unaccountable International Sports Organizations” (p. 15); and they have increasingly significant security costs. He goes on to note that the critical difference between the two is more about prestige and profile as opposed to scale.

The Commonwealth and Olympic Games share very similar organisational structures. For example, neither the IOC and CGF, the governing bodies of the Olympic and Commonwealth Games actually stage their respective events, but rather, own the rights and are responsible for the general direction of their respective event movements. Each body is responsible for selecting host cities that establish local organising committees to prepare and deliver the event (Foreman & Parent, 2008).

While the classification of events may seem pedantic, Black (2014) states:

...there is a clear bias toward the truly global, large-scale, ‘first-order’ events – specifically the Olympic Games and the FIFA World Cup...such a bias introduces a significant distortion to the academic study of sports mega-events because there are many more hosts (urban, regional, and national) associated with second-order (international scope but lower participation and profile, for example, the Commonwealth Games, or Cricket and Rugby World Cups) or even third-order (regional or continental events, for example, the Pan American or Asian Games, or the African Cup of Nations)... (p.14).

Roche (2017) shared a similar concern stating:

It is becoming more useful, even necessary, to distinguish more clearly and consistently between first-order and second-order mega-events, and there is an increasing need to devote more research attention to the latter group (p. 6).

When considering Müller’s (2015) classification of the Delhi 2010 Commonwealth Games as a fringe mega-event, as well as the lack of consideration given to internal characteristics

such as organisational complexity, this study positions the Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games as a second-order mega-event.

### ***2.2.2 A Commonwealth Games Overview***

The first Commonwealth Games (CWG), initially called the British Empire Games, was staged in Hamilton (Canada) in 1932. The vision of its creator, Bobby Anderson, was to stage a sporting celebration in 1930 that projected the British approach to the spirit of sports and fair play; this was designed to undermine the more nationalistic ethos of the Olympic Games (Marcin, 2017; Moore, 1989). Within the sport events industry, the Commonwealth Games has long been considered a “poor stepchild” to the Olympics (Foreman & Parent, 2008). To distinguish the CG from the Olympics, in 1974, the CGF rebranded the Christchurch Games as the “Friendly Games,” a name that is still attached to the Games. At the 1978 Edmonton Games, the name of the event was detached from its colonial roots and rebranded as the CG (Lockstone & Baum, 2008)

The historical connection with the British crown has helped established a broad institutional structure for the Games (Foreman & Parent, 2008). This history of the Games in reference to British monarchy and politics has been a persistent research topic among scholars (Houlihan, 2014; Keech, 2018; Marcin, 2017; Moore, 1989). The Games themselves grew exponentially following successful iterations of the event from 1990-2006 (Keech, 2018). Key external factors in the sport events industry also contributed to this growth: developments in mass communication technologies; the influx of sponsorship revenue; and, recognition by place marketers of the value of large events as promotional tools for host cities and regions aiming to boost tourism and economic development (Horne, 2007). However, unprecedented deficits in planning and organising by the Delhi organising committee resulted in significant damage to the CWG brand (Keech, 2018).

Indeed, Osborne, Sherry, and Nicholson (2016) analysed Australian print media covering the 2010 Delhi Games and identified threats to the institution of the CWG as a major theme. Specifically, they identified articles that discussed: a lack of local and international media audiences; a crowded sporting mega-event calendar; and, the mediocre quality of the sporting competition in comparison to other mega-events.

The challenge for the CGF was to rebuild the brand of the CWG by developing a commercial model that reduced financial barriers for candidate host cities, while also establishing a stronger alignment with the purpose of the Commonwealth (Keech, 2018).

Subsequently, the CGF published a new strategic plan, *Transformation 2022*. Keech (2018) compared the CGF's Transformation 2022 to the IOC's Agenda 2020, which above all else, aimed to reduce the economic burden placed on potential Olympic host cities.

### ***2.2.3 Mega-Event Research***

Researchers from various academic fields such as leisure, hospitality, and tourism studied planned events well before Getz (2000, 2002) proposed event studies as a distinct field that, "...focused on the phenomenon of events in society" (Getz, 2002, p. 13). Prior to the emergence of event management research, early studies on planned events predominately focused on their economic value to the tourism sector (Formica, 1998; Getz, 2012b; Kim et al., 2013). However, some scholars recognised benefits outside of economics such as the intrinsic value of the Olympic Games (Cicarelli & Kowarsky, 1973), as well as improvements in destination image and seasonality effects (Ritchie & Beliveau, 1974). Ritchie's (1984) seminal article proposed a classification of event impacts based on five factors: economic, socio-cultural, physical, psychological, and political.

While mega-event social impact studies began to gain prominence in the following two decades (Elstad, 1996; Jones, 2001; Roche, 1994) economic impact studies remained the predominant topic for research (Dwyer, Forsyth, & Spurr, 2006; Mair & Whitford, 2013). However, several scholars warned that economic impact assessments can be exaggerated (Dwyer et al., 2006) as "...the numbers are ultimately political numbers" (Chalip, 2017, p. 403). Horne (2007) was also weary of the often-biased nature of economic impact assessments, stating, "...often research has been conducted in advance of sports mega-events on behalf of interested parties" (p.11).

In their review of event tourism studies, (Kim et al., 2013) found a significant increase in economic assessments of mega-events in the 2000s. Economic assessments of events generated from tourism activities are generally derived from visitor expenditure on hotels, restaurants, and other local businesses during the event, followed by increased tourism after the event (Preuss, 2007). For example, Mitchell and Stewart (2015) examined tourism related benefits generated from three FIFA World Cups and five Olympic Games and found little economic justification for their host cities. In their review of ex-post economic impact assessments, Hagn and Maennig (2008) stated that, "the majority of these studies suggest that the sporting events or sports stadia have little or no significant impact on regional income and/or employment" (p. 1063).

Getz (2008) stated that, “the mid- to late-1990s were the ‘take-off’ years for [the] academic institutionalization of event management, and with it a more legitimized advancement of scholarship on event tourism and event studies” (p. 410). Thus, the 2000s saw the scope of event studies broaden to topics such as attendee experience management (Kim et al., 2013). Park and Park (2017) conducted a thematic analysis of event management related research published in peer-reviewed journals from 1998-2013. They found that destination, management, and marketing were the most dominant themes, accounting for approximately 70% of the publications in their sample.

The pursuit of one-upmanship in staging mega-events led to host cities needing more resources to stage them and has diminished the little evidence of positive economic impact they generate (Lockstone-Binney & Ong, 2019). Anti-Olympic movements have ascended from residents of bidding cities, such as Boston, in an effort to convince decision-makers not to host the Games in their city (Kassens-Noor & Lauermann, 2018). The rising public opinion against staging mega-events has coincided with more critical research that contests their economic benefits to host cities (Owen, 2005; Sant, Mason, & Hinch, 2014; Toohey, 2008). Scholars have sought other means of exploring the value and impacts of events. Three areas of research that have seen significant growth are event leveraging, legacy, and sustainability.

Chalip’s (2004) initial framework around the leveraging of events focused on the enhancement of both short- longer-term economic outcomes from events through business development, fostering tourism and destination branding. O’Brien and Chalip (2008) integrated social and economic leveraging efforts, while, incorporating environmental development as a special case of social leverage. The event leverage perspective postulates that strategic planning of desired event outcomes begins well in advance of the staging of the event, thus demonstrating a shift from “the traditional *ex post*, impact-driven, outcomes orientation, to a more strategic *ex ante*, analytical approach” (O’Brien & Chalip, 2007, p. 297). The quality of event outcomes is dependent upon the host community’s ability to strategically plan and proactively pursue desired outcomes (Kellett, Hede, & Chalip, 2008).

The legacy concept emerged as a means of justifying vast resource expenditure on mega-events for sustained long-term city development (Parent, 2013; Smith, 2014). Event legacy has most commonly been associated with the Olympic Games following Sydney 2000 (Parent, 2013). Preuss’ (2007) definition of event legacy has emerged as one of the most commonly referenced; “Irrespective of the time of production and space, legacy is all



planned and unplanned, positive and negative, tangible and intangible structures created for and by a sport event that remain longer than the event itself” (p. 211). Research on legacy has significantly increased since 2007 and has covered a wide array of topics with outcomes, delivery, governance, and conceptualisation being the most prevalent topics (Thomson et al., 2019).

As the central focus of this study, ISO 20121 has elements of leverage and legacy incorporated into the standard. Legacy and sustainability are often used synonymously, especially by event practitioners (Parent, 2013). Ironically, ISO 20121 is considered, a legacy of the London 2012 Olympic Games. The next section focuses specifically on sustainability within a mega-event context and distinguishes legacy and sustainability as distinct research areas within the academic literature.

#### ***2.2.4 Defining Sustainability: The Sport and Event Context***

Within the events sector, sustainability emerged in conjunction with the environmental Olympic Movement. Following heavy criticism of the Albertville 1992 Winter Olympic Games for their environmental destruction (May, 1995), the following Lillehammer Games in 1994 became known as the “Green Games” (Leopkey & Parent, 2012). At this event, the organisers showed great emphasis on staging a green event through various initiatives: an environmental policy that aimed to minimise the use of natural material, conserve energy in heating and cooling systems, develop a recycling scheme, and strategically plan where newly constructed facilities were situated (Leopkey & Parent, 2012; Lesjø, 2000). Sustainability has since been described as a more holistic concept with more depth than just environmental considerations (Leopkey & Parent, 2012). Within the academic literature on sustainable events, there are numerous definitions of the sustainable event (Cavagnaro, Postma, & Neese, 2012; Henderson, 2011; Laing & Frost, 2010; Musgrave & Raj, 2009; Smith-Christensen, 2009). As the focus of this thesis is on the diffusion of ISO 20121, the study adopts the standard’s definition, which depicts sustainability as the: ... degree of sustainable development in the context of the organization or event.

Sustainable development [is development] that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Note 1 to entry: The process provides an enduring, balanced approach to economic activity, environmental responsibility and social progress.

Note 2 to entry: Sustainable development is about integrating the goals of a high quality of life, health and prosperity with social justice and maintaining the earth's capacity to support life in all its diversity. These social, economic and environmental goals are interdependent and mutually reinforcing. Sustainable development can be treated as a way of expressing the broader expectations of society as a whole (ISO, 2012, p. 2).

The standard's definition of ISO 26121 is based on the Brundtland Commission's (1987) Report entitled 'Our Common Future'. The Brundtland Commission's definition of sustainable development has been widely accepted due to its extensive use and frequency of citation (Kates, Parris, & Leiserowitz, 2005). However, this definition has also been questioned due to its perceived vagueness (Williams, Wilmshurst, & Clift, 2011). This ambiguity has led to a lack of consensus among researchers, which has equated to an estimated 300 subsequent definitions of the concept (Johnston, Everard, Santillo, & Robert, 2007). Questions around what is to be sustained and developed, the temporal scale for sustainable development and the primary determinants of intergenerational and intra-generational definitions of needs, have all plagued the term since its conception (Kates et al., 2005; Lélé, 1991; Parris & Kates, 2003; Redclift, 2005).

While it is clear that the concept has been open for interpretation due to its vagueness, it is generally accepted that sustainability is a complex issue comprised of a broad range of interrelated environmental, social, and economic pillars (Holmes, Hughes, Mair, & Carlsen, 2015; Musgrave & Raj, 2009). Environmental sustainability is concerned with the maintenance of natural capital, which reflects the Earth's stock of naturally provided assets like soil, air, water and living things (Goodland, 1995). Social sustainability refers to the implementation of structured frameworks that assist in creating ethical and equitable societies, and addresses notions such as equal opportunity, human rights, strengthening local communities and meeting the needs of all groups of people (Holmes et al., 2015; Musgrave & Raj, 2009). Finally, economic sustainability can be achieved through the realisation of higher standards of living for present and future generations (British Government Panel on Sustainable Development, 1994).

The principles of sustainable development were embraced rather quickly by non-governmental organisations such as the United Nations, and slowly adopted by an ever-increasing number of multinational companies (Cavagnaro et al., 2012). The transition from

a planetary concept to a practical tool at the organisational level was not an easy one due to the aforementioned vagueness of the concept. However, Hart's (1997) "Beyond Greening" article brought the sustainability discussion to the forefront of the wider business community. The following year, the notion of the *triple bottom line* (TBL) challenged the traditional economic logic by introducing a new sustainable accounting framework, commonly known as *people-profit-planet* (Elkington, 1998). These two seminal pieces manifested a change in the way businesses were expected to operate and sparked a new avenue for social science research (Richardson, 2009; Welford & Starkey, 2001).

Sustainability is a concept that has a rich history in scholarly research and has been on political and business agendas for some time. However, the integration of sustainability within the events industry has been slow due to the general perception of the concept's limited applicability to enduring business, which contradicts the transient nature of events (Cavagnaro et al., 2012). Within an event context, the Brundtland Commission's vague definition of sustainable development leads to inconsistent views around sustainability as events involve numerous stakeholders with varying perspectives of sustainability-related issues (Cavagnaro et al., 2012). As events increase in scale, sustainability issues become more complicated. Major and mega-events involve more stakeholders, which leads to a more inconsistent definition of the sustainable event. Given these complexities, there is no definitive statement on what constitutes a sustainable event (Musgrave & Henderson, 2015).

The varying perspectives of what constitutes the sustainable event generally can be differentiated between the greening of events and the holistic view of sustainability (Tinnish & Mangal, 2012). A green event focuses on minimising negative environmental impacts and promoting potential environmental benefits (Holmes et al., 2015). For example, Laing and Frost (2010) defined the green event as, "...an event that has a sustainability policy or incorporates sustainable practices into its management and operations" (p. 262). The more holistic approach to sustainability gives all three interrelated environmental, social, and economic pillars equal consideration, and examines sustainability across the entire lifecycle of the event (Henderson, 2011). Getz's (2009) definition aligns with the holistic view: "A sustainable event goes beyond the capacity of being able to exist and reproduce on a long-term basis – they are also events that fulfil important social, cultural, economic and environmental roles that people value" (p. 70). Research in sport management and event studies reflects these two distinct views on sustainability.

### ***2.2.5 Sustainability Research in Sport Management and Event Studies***

Events have become an integral part of the sustainability discussion due to their often excessive ecological impacts, as well as their ability to be leveraged as a means of communication to a large audience (Schmidt, 2006). Although research interest in sustainability is prevalent, it remains an underdeveloped area in sport management and event studies (Lockstone-Binney, 2018; Mair & Whitford, 2013; Mallen, 2018; Stevens, 2018).

Sustainability research within sport management has recently seen exponential growth; although there are some unexplored areas. Mallen (2018) identified 53 manuscripts published from 2009 to 2015 in her content analysis of sustainability research in 21 sport-related journals. Only 17 manuscripts were found between 1987 and 2008 in a previous study (Mallen, Stevens, & Adams, 2011). Common areas of sustainability research explored topics such as corporate social responsibility (Babiak & Trendafilova, 2011; Trendafilova, Babiak, & Heinze, 2013; Walker, Heere, Parent, & Drane, 2010), sustainability legacies and the Olympics (Konstantaki & Wickens, 2010; Samuel & Stubbs, 2013), and the triple bottom line (Dingle, 2009; Djaballah, Hautbois, & Desbordes, 2015; Kellison & Kim, 2014). It is important to note that Mallen's review did not include research that omitted the environmental pillar of sustainability.

Within the area of sustainability and event studies, Mair and Whitford (2013) identified five specific topics in sustainability research: socio-cultural and political dimensions (Dickson & Arcodia, 2010; Dredge & Whitford, 2010), planning and management (Jones, 2017; Musgrave & Raj, 2009), procedural research that describes the planning process of sustainable events (Getz & Page, 2016a), and impact/evaluation research (Andersson & Lundberg, 2013). Scholars have predominately researched the environmental impact of events on the physical attributes of a host destination by incorporating it into the triple bottom line approach (Getz, 2009; Mair & Whitford, 2013). Another emerging method for the evaluation of environmental impacts of events is through the measurement of an events' ecological footprint (Andersson & Lundberg, 2013; Collins & Flynn, 2008). In their review that included interviews with 22 event experts, Mair and Whitford (2013) found that sustainability and events was the fifth most important sub-topic for respondents among 29 event-related research areas.

Sport and event researchers have been proficient in identifying economic impacts (Crompton, 1999) and have quickly adapted to environmental (Collins, Jones, & Munday, 2009) and triple bottom line impact assessments (Andersson & Lundberg, 2013). The

holistic approach to evaluation has led to a more comprehensive understanding of event-related outcomes. However, what is less understood is how sustainability is practiced (Silva & Figueiredo, 2017). The research agenda is shifting towards examining the processes and conditions that influence the integration of sustainability into the entire lifecycle of the event. Two areas of research illustrate the practice of sustainability: event portfolios and event networks.

First, an event portfolio is, “a strategic tool rather than a random collection of miscellaneous events that are hosted in a community” (Ziakas, 2014, p. 329). The recent empirical studies on event portfolios have primarily been applied to destinations in the context of non-mega-events (Clark & Misener, 2015; Gration, Raciti, Getz, & Andersson, 2016; Kelly & Fairley, 2018; Pereira, Mascarenhas, Flores, & Pires, 2015; Ziakas & Costa, 2011). Event portfolios can also be cross-leveraged to maximise potential benefits of mega-events for host cities as they, “enable the development of synergistic means that aim to attain, magnify, and sustain the benefits and planned legacies of events” (Ziakas, 2014, p. 331). For example, Chien, Kelly, and Gill (2018) identified strategies for non-host cities of mega-events to cross-leverage through enhancing destination brand equity, integrating strategies with existing portfolios, fostering social capital, and enhancing corporate networks. Thus, strategic integration of event portfolios into the mega-event context has potential to add value to realising sustainable events, but more research is needed in this area.

Another important means of realising sustainable events are through the creation of sustained networks. Networks are of particular importance to mega-events, as they are highly complex collections of heterogeneous actors and organisations (Olkkonen, 2001; Parent & Deephouse, 2007). Mega events generate new relationships among organisations internal and external to a host destination. They require the formation of new organisations to plan and deliver, such as an organising committee. Thus, relationships can be built among organisations, as well as individuals, that have potential to lead to sustained benefits. For example, Ponsford (2011) examined the enablers and barriers to the practical application of the environmental program at the Vancouver 2010 Winter Olympic Games. He found that intra-organisational relationships were critical to realising environmental sustainability at Games venues. Werner, Dickson, and Hyde (2015) examined the knowledge transfer processes between organisations in regional tourism networks during the staging of the 2011 Rugby World Cup held in New Zealand. They demonstrated the ability of a major event to

facilitate knowledge acquisition and transfer among these organisations through regulation, infrastructural, technological and trade systems. At the firm level, international event experts, inter-firm collaboration, document exchange, imitation, demonstration, and observation served important channels of knowledge transfer in areas like event management, relationship-building and collaboration (Werner et al., 2015).

O'Brien (2006) used a network approach to explore how business was leveraged from Sydney's hosting of the 2000 Olympic Games. He found that the business linkages that were created provided conduits to additional webs of contact. Thus, illustrating the process of networking as a mode of leveraging and navigating through Olkkonen's (2001) contentions about the complexity of event networks. O'Brien's (2006) work also emphasised that owners and managers involved with staging mega-events need to take a collaborative approach to strategic planning in order to realise longer-term, sustainable business outcomes.

Although still underdeveloped, sustainability has emerged as an important area of research in sport and event studies. Its growth has been quite similar to the studies of planned events, which emerged out of the tourism field as a distinct area of research in the 1980s. The early stages of sustainability research have focused mainly on impacts; generally employing a triple bottom line framework. The sub-field has since diversified, but there are still areas relatively unexplored (Mallen, 2018).

Beyond academia, the sport and event industry has become more receptive to adopting sustainable practices. This interest is evident by the number of sustainability standards that have been developed in the past 10 years (Guizzardi et al., 2017; Nguyen, 2018). Surprisingly, "research on the adoption and consequences of ecological standards and environmental certification is virtually absent from the extant literature" (Guizzardi et al., 2017, p. 1055). Getz and Page (2016b) suggest that the most notable of the emerging sustainability standards is ISO 20121. For this reason, ISO 20121 is the central contextual focus of this thesis. The next section provides a background to standards with a specific focus on the development of ISO 20121. This history is followed by an examination and further discussion of the standard.

### 2.3. Standards

The varied use of the term “standard” has served to limit efforts to reach an agreed upon definition of the term. Brunsson and Jacobsson (2000, p. 2) offered quite a vague definition of standards as, “pieces of general advice offered to a large number of adopters” (p. 2). More specifically, the ISO (2003) definition identified a standard as a,

. . . document, established by consensus and approved by a recognized body, that provides, for common and repeated use, rules, guidelines or characteristics for activities or their results, aimed at the achievement of the optimum degree of order in a given context (p. 5).

Within the context of organisation studies, Brunsson, Rasche, and Seidl (2012) identified a universal definition of what constitutes a standard. They stated that a standard is, “a rule for common and voluntary use, decided by one or several people or organisations” (p. 617). Brunsson and colleagues’ definition within this organisational context was based on three core characteristics of standards.

First, standards reflect explicitly formulated rules that differ from implicit social norms; thus, standards constitute a specific type of rule (Brunsson et al., 2012). The explicit rule-based characteristic of standards helps achieve social order through the regulation of individual and collective behaviour (Kerwer, 2005; Seidl, 2007). These rules are intended to provide a prescription for good management practices within a specific context.

Second, adoption of standards is voluntary in nature, giving potential adopters the ability to decide to comply or not (Brunsson et al., 2012). While standardisers do not force compliance, potential adopters may receive external pressures to adopt standards based on the focal standard’s perceived legitimacy within the organisational field, or pressure exerted by third parties (Bernstein & Cashore, 2007). For example, Guler, Guillen, and MacPherson (2002) showed that powerful corporations exert coercive isomorphic pressures by only doing business with suppliers that comply with ISO 9001.

Third, standards define normative rules that are meant for common use within a given field (Brunsson et al., 2012; Rasche, 2010). While some standards are organisation-specific, most are intended for field-level use. They enable and restrict behaviour by providing a prescription of how individuals and organisations should conduct themselves within a given context (Ortmann, 2010).

### ***2.3.1 The Types of Standards: Process vs. Outcome-Based***

Sustainability standards take two forms, process and outcome-based standards (Walker, 2012). Process-based standards require an organisation to implement a management system that outlines steps to achieve a contextual objective, which for the purposes of this study, are sustainability objectives (Walker, 2012). While the processes put in place are regulated, the actual outcomes are not evaluated. For example, ISO 20121 is concerned with an organisation's ability to instil the processes that will lead to the staging of a sustainable event; it does not measure the sustainability outcomes of an event directly. Generally, organisations are required to:

- Create a sustainability policy;
- Identify their event's impacts and/or sustainability issues;
- Put plans in place to minimise negative impacts and enhance positive impacts;
- Implement a process for monitoring performance and reporting results; and,
- Strive for continuous improvement (Meidinger, 2006).

Since the achievement of performance targets are not incorporated into process-based standards like the ISO ones, they are often criticised because organisations are not compelled to provide evidence of positive results from their implementation (Gotzamani & Tsiotras, 2001). However, the main advantage of this type of standard is that they are more adaptable (Meidinger, 2001).

The number of guides and protocols relating to sustainability has been growing in recent years to assist event managers in adopting suitable practices. Some guides and protocols are specific to a region and sustainability issues such as the Convention Industry Council's "Accepted Practices Exchange" (APEX) / American Society of Testing and Materials (ASTM) "Environmentally Sustainable Meeting Standards." The APEX/ASTM targets eight key environmental sustainability areas and offers a more prescriptive approach than ISO 20121 to event managers. Others are more inclusive but focus on specific sustainability issues. For example, ISO 14001 establishes criteria for an environmental management system and ISO 26000 helps organisations address social responsibility issues. Thus, given the apparent plethora of potentially applicable sustainability-related tools and standards, the next section explores the role of standards in contemporary society.

Performance-based standards require an adopter not only to provide clearly



identifiable and measurable goals, but also to realise these goals (Power, 1997). For example, the APEX/ASTM standard mentioned above is a performance-based standard designed to provide a uniform measurement of environmental performance that is composed of nine individual standards such as, for example, accommodation and transportation (Guizzardi et al., 2017). Due to the complex and dynamic nature of organisations and their environments, performance-based standards give a clearer scope to adopters in deciding what steps are necessary to achieve standardised outcomes (Black, Hopper, & Band, 2007).

As process-based standards may not always lead to desired outcomes, it is common for adopters to incorporate performance-based metrics as well, which complicates the distinction between the two types of standards (Banta, 1992; Brunsson et al., 2012). The only requirement for compliance of performance metrics within a process-based standard is that the internal mechanisms are outlined, which allows for flexibility (Meidinger, 2001). Walker (2012) argued that adoption of both ISO 20121 and APEX/ASTM standards would maximise their benefits, while only using one may put an organisation at risk of not achieving their desired outcomes. His basis for this argument is that each standard's structure is meant to be complimentary, not competitive, and that there is an additional influence of legitimacy, accountability, and effectiveness.

### ***2.3.2 A Short History of ISO Management System Standards***

The main purpose of ISO is to assist the international exchange of goods and services in order to enhance technological, economic, and scientific activity throughout the world (Wall, Weersink, & Swanton, 2001). As a non-state actor, ISO facilitates commerce by developing international standards and codes through its technical committees comprised of representatives from businesses, governments, and other stakeholders (Rada, 2000). The organisation currently has a membership of 162 private sector national bodies such as the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) and the British Standards Institution (BSI) (ISO, 2003). ISO's portfolio is comprised of almost 22,000 international standards (ISO, 2018).

ISO was founded as an international non-governmental organisation in 1946 in Geneva, Switzerland, following World War II. The organisation emerged out of wartime standardisation efforts among the Western Allied powers, as ISO supporters realised the importance of standardisation to the recovery of economies following World War II (Yates

& Murphy, 2006). While it is commonly assumed that ISO is an acronym for the International Organization for Standardization, its name is derived from the Greek word *iso*, which in English, translates to “equal” (Elefsiniotis & Wareham, 2005).

Murphy and Yates (2009) detailed three periods in the evolution of ISO’s role in standardisation. In the first phase (1947 to 1964), ISO began its operations primarily based in Europe. Its main focus was on standardising industrial terminology, measurement and testing, and product design to ensure products were safe, reliable, and of good quality. The second phase (1964 to 1986), was evident through exponential global growth of ISO standards and its role in economic globalisation. During this time, ISO transitioned to unifying duplicative national standards by developing independent global standards such as the development of ISO 216 in 1975, which defined the A and B series of paper sizes. ISO’s current phase (1987-present), has been marked by a shift from the creation of technical standards to the development of generic standards for organisational management with its publication of the ISO 9000 series of quality management systems. The main purpose of the ISO 9000 series was to help firms implement a quality management system to satisfy customer expectations and regulatory requirements (Hoyle, 2009).

ISO’s organisational management standards focus on how a product or service is delivered and not the technical requirements for the end product or service (Cascio, Woodside, & Mitchell, 1996). Thus, they are considered process-based standards as opposed to outcome-based standards. As the only certifiable standard within ISO’s family of standards, the adoption rate of ISO 9001 was overwhelming as certification of the standard was viewed by adopting firms as a ticket to enter the global market (Mehta & Wilcock, 1996). With more than one million organisations certified worldwide, ISO 9001 is by far the most widely adopted ISO management system standard (ISO, 2015).

The success of ISO 9000 and growing scientific concern for the state of the global environment, highlighted by the 1992 Rio Earth Summit, provided a platform for the development of another family of standards designed to help firms develop and objectively evaluate environmental management systems. In 1996, the first of the ISO 14000 series of standards was published to help firms implement an environmental management system to manage their ecological responsibilities. Similar to ISO 9001, ISO 14001 is the only standard the opportunity for adopting firms to seek third party accreditation. ISO 14001 is the second most widely adopted ISO management system standard with over 300,000 organisations certified worldwide (ISO, 2015).

ISO has since published management system standards in generic fields such as health and medicine, information technology, food safety, and its most controversial to date, social responsibility (ISO, 2019). The focus of this study is on ISO's first management system standard for the events industry, ISO 20121: Event sustainability management systems (ISO, 2012).

### ***2.3.3 The Creation of ISO 20121: Event Sustainability Management Systems***

The impetus for the creation of ISO 20121 can be traced back to 2004 and London's bid for the 2012 Summer Olympic and Paralympic Games. London's Candidate File detailed a commitment to the delivery of a sustainable Games through the development and implementation of a Sustainable Management System similar to ISO 14001 (London 2012, 2004). The bid promise started to evolve into an action plan in July 2005 at a London 2012 bid promotion event, when David Stubbs, the Head of Sustainability for the London Organising Committee (LOCOG), discussed innovative ways to deliver a sustainable event with Arnold Pinter from the BSI (Pelham, 2011). During this time, the wider events industry was becoming increasingly aware of the necessity to integrate more sustainable practices into the staging of events. This increasing need, coupled with London 2012 as a catalyst, led to the creation of *BS 8901:2007 Specification for a sustainable event management system with guidance for use*. The British national standard specifies the requirements for a sustainability management system that can be adopted by any firm within the events industry such as event organisers, venue managers, and organisations in the supply chain (BSI, 2007). The second version of BS8901 was published in 2009 to make it more user-friendly for adopters. The second version of the standard was received favourably internationally as organisers of high-profile events such as the United Nations Copenhagen Climate Conference (COP15), and the Microsoft Convergence® 2009 achieved BS8901 certification. In response to the momentum BS8901 was building, a joint proposal by BSI Group and the Brazilian national standards body (ABNT) was submitted in 2008 to develop the national standard into an ISO standard.

The following year, ISO introduced the project committee (PC) responsible for developing the standard: ISO/PC 250, Sustainability in event management. The PC was comprised of delegations of experts from 25 national standards institutions, with another ten countries as observers, eight event and sustainability industry organisations, and was chaired by Fiona Pelham, Managing Director of Sustainable Events Ltd (Hall, 2012). To approve a

new standard, ISO requires two-thirds majority approval in the technical committee and a three-fourths majority among ISO voting members. ISO reviews and, if necessary, revises each standard at least every five years (ISO, 2003). The final vote on ISO 20121 occurred on 30 May 2012. Upon receiving approval, ISO 20121 was officially launched in the summer of 2012 to coincide with the London Olympic and Paralympic Games (Lauermann, 2014).

ISO 20121 specifies the requirements of an event sustainability management system and offers guidance for use to support the delivery of sustainable events for its adopters (refer to Appendix A for an overview of the standard). Potential adopters are typically involved with all types of events such as exhibitions, sporting competitions, and concerts (Jones, 2017). It was published using common international language for the events industry to ensure its applicability in various organisational, geographical, cultural, and social conditions. Jones (2017) states that ISO 20121,

... provide[s] a framework to implement a system to manage an event's sustainable development issues. Rather than being a checklist, ISO 20121 requires a systematic approach to addressing sustainable development issues in relation to event planning. It can be applied to an event organizer, a single event or a venue (p. 134).

This framework is as relevant for small conference meetings as it is for mega sport events like the Olympic Games. ISO 20121 takes a management system approach and requires adopters to identify key sustainability issues related to their events such as venue selection, operating procedures, supply chain management, procurement, communications, and transport (Jones, 2017). This standard does not impose any specific sustainable performance criteria but compels users to identify important sustainability aspects associated with their operations and activities. Users are required to complete a detailed review while documenting their organisation's sustainable management process and sustainability policy. The sustainability policy needs to clarify compliance with any legislation related to sustainability that may impact the organisation, while also promoting a commitment to continual improvement. Since ISO 20121 is a process standard, there are no requirements for sustainable performance aside from compliance with legislation and a commitment to continual improvement (Brunsson et al., 2012). Adopters can implement ISO 20121 for the internal benefits it brings to their processes and equally, external benefits in terms of kudos from their customers and stakeholders.

Adopters may declare conformity to ISO 20121 through a first-party self-audit. Alternatively, they may also choose to seek an external audit and declaration from a non-accredited entity in a second-party assessment. Finally, they can also decide to be assessed against the standard by an independent auditor to achieve third-party certification of the voluntary standard (Walker, 2012). Third-party certifications for ISO standards are awarded independently by hundreds of certification bodies worldwide. ISO itself does not audit or assess conformity against its standards, as the organisation is purely a standard developer (Wood, 2012). Although certification is not a requirement of ISO 20121, as Chapter Four details, institutional forces play a role in the degree to which voluntary ISO management system standards become widely adopted.

## **2.4 Institutional Theory**

Institutional theory has prevailed as a dominant theoretical approach used to examine phenomena within the voluntary standards (Tuczek, Castka, & Wakolbinger, 2018), sport management (Washington & Patterson, 2011), and broader organisational (Greenwood, Oliver, Lawrence, & Meyer, 2017) fields of research. At the centre of institutional theory are institutions, or “rules of the game in a society” (North, 1990, p. 3). As the institutional perspective progressed and diverged into various areas, the literature has become replete with multiple interpretations of institutions. The current study adopts Greenwood, Oliver, Sahlin-Andersson, and Suddaby (2008) definition of institutions as, “... more-or-less taken-for-granted repetitive social behaviour that is underpinned by normative systems and cognitive understanding that give meaning to social exchange and thus enable self-reproducing social order” (pp. 4-5). Institutions within this perspective exist at individual, organisational, field, and societal-levels (Greenwood et al., 2017). They are sustained through “...relatively self-activating social processes” (Jepperson, 1991, p. 145).

Institutional theory has commonly been used to understand how institutions influence decision-making in organisations, leading to the similarity among organisational structures and processes. In fact, seminal works (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983, 1991; Meyer & Rowan, 1977) built on this premise led to a distinct divide between “old” and “new” institutional theory. More recently, research has focused on the effects individual and organisational action have on institutions (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006). Thus, several institutional scholars have shifted away from differentiating between the two to “end the family quarrel” (Hirsch & Lounsbury, 1997, p. 406).

Washington and Patterson (2011) identified five key tenets of institutional theory: isomorphism, organisational fields, institutional logics, institutionalisation and legitimacy, and organisational and institutional change. The following section provides an overview of these key areas and presents field-configuring events (FCEs) as an emerging extension of institutional theory.

#### ***2.4.1 Isomorphism***

The concept of isomorphism has been well-documented within institutional studies. As organisations operate within an institutional environment, they adopt analogous processes and procedures; therefore, becoming isomorphic over time. These formal organisational structures arise from environmental pressures and the pursuit of legitimacy, regardless of their effect on internal efficiency (Meyer & Rowan, 1977). DiMaggio and Powell (1983) described three mechanisms of isomorphism: coercive, mimetic, and normative pressures for conformity. Coercive isomorphism results from formal or informal pressures exerted by actors who leverage valuable resources or legitimacy to pressure an organisation to conform to expected norms. Organisations act rationally by following rules established by actors who control valuable resources to avoid actual or perceived penalties that could result from non-compliance (Hoffman, 1999).

Mimetic isomorphism occurs when uncertainty exists within organisations with respect to goal setting and/or the means by which goals are achieved. When managers experience uncertainty, they mimic the structures and practices of leading organisations in similar fields. Alternatively, normative isomorphism refers to standards and cognitive frameworks that are created in professions from formal education, professional experience, and inter-organisational networks. To gain legitimacy, these isomorphic tendencies stem from rational choices made by key actors in related fields, which ultimately, leads to organisations that look and act similar to each other in form and function (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983).

#### ***2.4.2 Organisational Fields***

Wooten and Hoffman (2017) state that “... the central construct of neo-institutional theory has been the organizational field” (Wooten & Hoffman, 2017, p. 56). They contend that the conception of the organisational field represents a pivotal divide between old and new institutionalism. Traditional institutional theory did not account for the field as the

prevailing definition of the institution was an, “...organization infused with value” (Selznick, 1957, p. 17). Neo-institutional theorists, however, argued that organisational practices, processes, and structures were also subjected to societal rules, values, and expectations (Meyer & Rowan, 1977).

Although the seminal work by DiMaggio and Powell (1983) is more commonly associated with their depiction of isomorphism, their interpretation of the organisational field has been the most commonly cited definition of the field (Zietsma, Groenewegen, Logue, & Hinings, 2017). DiMaggio and Powell (1983) defined the organisational field as, “... those organisations that, in the aggregate, constitute a recognised area of institutional life: key suppliers, resource and product consumers, regulatory agencies and other organisations that produce similar services or products” (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983, p. 143). Scott (2004) provided a more encompassing definition, depicting the organisational field as, “a collection of diverse interdependent organizations that participate in a common meaning system” (p. 104).

These widely cited definitions of the organisational field were conducive to institutional studies that focused on the homogeneity of organisations within a relatively static field. However, they were not adequate in accounting for dynamic processes that gravitated towards something other than isomorphism, as scholars became more focused on change. Powell, Oberg, Korff, Oelberger, and Kloos (2017) describe this evolution: “organizational fields have changed over the past four decades — they are more dynamic, boundaries are more porous, different organizations have come to populate them and the power differentials among members have been altered...” (p. 37).

The organisational field is the most essential concept within institutional theory to understand institutional processes (Scott, 2014). Yet, as the literature has diversified to examine more dynamic and complex phenomena, organisational fields have been viewed as “...containers for the community of organizations...” (Wooten & Hoffman, 2017 p.56) in which these phenomena take place. Consequently, many authors have not adequately distinguished between “institutional field” and “organisational field,” using the terms synonymously and not empirically or explicitly addressing the characteristics or condition of the field under study (Zietsma et al., 2017).

In an effort to “clarify and consolidate” empirical research on organisational fields, Zietsma et al. (2017) identified two types of fields through an empirical analysis of organisational research: exchange and issue fields. *Exchange* fields are aligned with

DiMaggio and Powell's (1983) definition in which fields form around industries or professions. Meanwhile, *issue* fields, first asserted by Hoffman (1999), are fields that form around particular issues, rather than through exchange relationships. Subsequently, Zietsma and her colleagues describe the characteristics, conditions for isomorphism, agency, and change of six sub-fields. Generally, issue fields are more dynamic and contested as heterogeneous actors enter the field with diverse institutional logics (Wooten & Hoffman, 2017). In their conclusion Zietsma et al. (2017) state that,

... there is an important relationship between exchange fields and issue fields. When issue focused actors engage with exchange fields, exchange fields convert to issue fields, often fostering changes in logics or other field elements ... issue fields may revert to exchange fields, as the issues that prompted competitive issue fields become encompassed in exchange fields' institutional infrastructure (p. 66).

Echoing the dynamism of Zietsma et al.'s conception of organisational fields, Wooten and Hoffman (2017) contend that the future of institutional theory is dependent on a shift in focus away from field outcomes to examining how fields evolve and change. One key driver of field-level change and evolution is the taken-for-granted beliefs, values and assumptions that underpin managerial actions and organisational processes in the field; taken together, these are referred to as institutional logics.

#### ***2.4.3 Institutional Logics***

Thornton and Ocasio (1999) define institutional logics as, "socially constructed, historical patterns of material practices, assumptions, values, beliefs and rules by which individuals produce and reproduce their material subsistence, organise time and space, and provide meaning to their social reality" (p. 804). These guiding principles govern behaviour and exist at various levels such as societies, fields and organisations (Ocasio, Thornton, & Lounsbury, 2017). While numerous logics exist at various levels and there are seven dominant institutions: markets, states, corporations, professions, families, religions, and community that guide different societal sectors (Friedland & Alford, 1991; Thornton, 2004; Thornton, Ocasio, & Lounsbury, 2012). The institutional logics perspective "...is a metatheoretical framework for analyzing the interrelationships among institutions, individuals, and organizations in social systems" (Thornton et al., 2012, p. 2). However, most scholarly attention has been given to field-level analysis of logics (Zilber, 2013).



The sudden rise in publications on institutional logics since 2011 marked a shift away from emphasising isomorphic pressures and more towards a focus on institutional fields that are pluralistic and complex (Ocasio et al., 2017). Institutional pluralism refers to environments in which actors are confronted with multiple logics (Kraatz & Block, 2008), while complexity is concerned with how actors experience and respond to pluralistic logics (Greenwood, Raynard, Kodeih, Micelotta, & Lounsbury, 2011). One of the main criticisms of the institutional logics perspective has been the tendency to “zoom in to the micro level” (Zilber, 2013, p. 82) and not account for field-level governing powers that strengthen a field’s bind. They referred to these forces as institutional infrastructure (Greenwood et al., 2011).

#### ***2.4.4 Institutional Infrastructure***

Greenwood et al., (2011) describe the significant implications that institutional infrastructure has on simplifying or intensifying institutional complexity, as well as enabling the comparison of fields. Yet, the concept has been relatively unexplored. Hinings et al. (2017) draw on empirical cases to provide a clearer conceptualisation of institutional infrastructure that describes, “...the features that bind a field together and govern field interactions” (p. 163). Thus, institutional infrastructure focuses on the foundational structures that underpin the ways in which actors operate and relate to each other, as illustrated in Table 2.2.

Table 2.2

*Dimensions of institutional infrastructure* (Hinings et al., 2017)

<b>Institutional Infrastructure Element</b>	<b>Examples</b>
Collective interest organizations	Unions, professional associations, industry associations
Regulators	National, provincial, industry, transnational
Informal governance bodies	Certifications or standards bodies, infomediaries, boundary organisations, accreditations organisations, voluntary governance organisations
Field configuring events	Events, conferences, exogenous shocks, trade shows, Olympics, fairs and festivals
Status differentiators	Labels, measures, signals, rankings, resources, education, historical position, award ceremonies, infomediaries
Organisational models or templates	Professional partnerships, managed professional businesses, hybrid organisations
Categories/labels	Genres, technology classes, mutual funds into high and low risk, listed corporations into industries, partitioning markets
Norms	Education and professional training
Relational Channels	Normative networks

As institutional scholars have become increasingly interested in examining change through institutional entrepreneurship, logics, and work, the relevance of classifying the elements of institutional infrastructure is necessary (Hinings, Logue, & Zietsma, 2017).

#### ***2.4.5 Institutionalisation and Legitimacy***

Institutionalisation is concerned with the processes by which “...structures, schemas, rules, and routines become established” (Scott, 2004, p. 408). Tolbert and Zucker (1996) provided a general three-stage model of institutionalisation. The initial pre-

institutionalisation (or habituation) stage begins with the creation and formalisation of new structures in response to organisational issues. This stage is characterised by few adopters and a lack of knowledge and consensus on the new structure's value among non-adopters. The semi-institutionalisation (or objectification) stage relates to higher adoption rates of the new structure and its general acceptance as a resolution to a particular issue throughout the field. The full institutionalisation (or sedimentation) stage is characterised by complete adoption of the structure and is taken-for-granted as new members in the field adopt without questioning its value. Although Tolbert and Zucker (1996) use the terms institutionalisation and diffusion synonymously, Colyvas and Jonsson (2011) differentiate them as distinct “flow” and “stick” processes and outcomes. In this view, diffusion does not necessarily lead to, “...relatively self-activating social processes” (Jepperson, 2001, p. 145). The opposite of institutionalisation is deinstitutionalisation, which refers to:

... the delegitimization of an established organizational practice or procedure as a result of organizational challenges to or the failure of organisations to reproduce previously legitimated or taken-for-granted organisational actions” (p. 564).

#### ***2.4.6 Institutional Change***

The early neo-institutional approach positioned institutions as static and resilient entities. Thus, institutional explanations of organisational change that involved agency and choice, rather than blind conformity proved to be elusive (Wooten & Hoffman, 2017). While old institutional theory accounted for the agency of actors (Selznick, 1949, 1957), subsequent neo-institutional work ignored the role of actors and focused instead on the isomorphic tendencies of organisations (Leca, Battilana, & Boxenbaum, 2008; Washington & Patterson, 2011). By the 1990s, institutional theorists argued that research placed too much emphasis on isomorphism as the “master hypothesis” (Hoffman & Ventresca, 2002). Powell et al. (2017) added to this by stating that:

This initial neo-institutional view was influential in explaining isomorphism and convergence. It was not intended, however, to account for how fields were disrupted, nor how disparate communities came together to form a nascent arena in response to new issues (p. 37).

Interest in how social actors could exert influence on their institutional context increased among researchers with the introduction of the concept of institutional

entrepreneurship (Lawrence & Masoud, 2008). Work by Maguire, Hardy, and Lawrence (2004) focused predominately on the role of social actors who leveraged resources to shape institutions. The ability for individual and collective actors to strategically alter their institutional context is dependent upon agency as a central theme. More recently, research in this area branched away from a focus on the positivist portrayal of “heroic” and “hypermasculine” actions of individuals to a more general concept that provides a social picture of actors and agency (Hampel, Lawrence, & Tracey, 2017; Suddaby, 2010).

## **2.5 Institutional Work**

Lawrence and Suddaby’s (2006) institutional work perspective evolved from two distinct sets of literature. First, institutional work connects previously disparate concepts within institutional theory that share agency as a central viewpoint: institutional entrepreneurship (DiMaggio, 1988); institutional change and innovation (Oliver, 1991); and deinstitutionalisation (Oliver, 1992). The second major set of writings central to institutional work comes from the sociology of practice tradition (Bourdieu, 1977; de Certeau, 1984; Giddens, 1984; Lave & Wenger, 1991). Sociology of practice research focuses on the actions of individuals and groups to meet the demands of pressures from day-to-day activities (de Certeau, 1984). As Lawrence and Suddaby (2006) posited:

... adopting a practice perspective on institutions points research and theory toward understanding the knowledgeable, creative and practical work of individual and collective actors aimed at creating, maintaining, and transforming institutions. (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006, p. 219)

Rather than understanding how institutions influence action, institutional work specifically focuses on how actions impact institutions in a recursive relationship (Lawrence, Suddaby, & Leca, 2009). The integration of these concepts that underpin institutional work led to the development of three broad categories within the institutional work framework: the creation, maintenance, and disruption of institutions. As a theory, institutional work is still maturing and is being shaped by empirical research that is extending knowledge of organisational change and the respective roles played by the various forms of institutional work (Lawrence, Leca, & Zilber, 2013).

The central role of agency distinguishes institutional work from neo-institutional theory; akin to the organisational field separating old and new institutionalism. Battilana,

Leca, and Bocenbaum (2009) conceptualised agency as, "... a temporally embedded process of social engagement, informed by the past, but oriented toward the future and present" (p.47). Thus, agency has three distinct dimensions: iterative (habit), projection (imagination), and practical-evaluation (judgement). This view of agency implies that actors' intentions are dependent upon the dimension of agency that dominates a particular instance of institutional work.

The three broad categories within the institutional work framework; creation, maintenance and disruption will now be discussed.

### ***2.5.1 Creation***

The creation of institutions is grounded on the concept of institutional entrepreneurship (DiMaggio, 1988; Eisenstadt, 1980) and builds upon the role of actors in the formation of institutions (Dacin, Goodstein, & Scott, 2002). Institutional entrepreneurship is concerned with the manner in which actors work to influence their institutional contexts through various strategies (Fligstein, 1997; Hoffman, 1999; Maguire, Hardy, & Lawrence, 2004; Rao, Morrill, & Zald, 2000). Previous research on the creation of institutions primarily focused on identifying characteristics of institutional entrepreneurs and environmental conditions that allow them to thrive, as opposed to what they actually do (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006). Most institutional work studies have been in the area of creating institutions.

### ***2.5.2 Maintenance***

After most established institutional structures are created, consistent and strategic efforts are required by actors to maintain the institution's status and power within the field (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006; Quinn & Washington, 2009). Institutions exist within a dynamic environment at both the organisational and broader field level (Lawrence et al., 2013). Thus, agency is essential for continuous reproduction of institutional norms (Lawrence, Winn, & Jennings, 2001). While institutional maintenance is critical to the stability of an institution, Lawrence and Suddaby (2006) found that maintenance work garnered relatively little attention in their review of empirical organisational and management literature. Since the original institutional workpiece was published, scholars have become increasingly interested in investigating how maintenance work is done. Lawrence et al. (2013, p. 1025) stated that, "...there has now emerged a stream of research

and theory devoted to understanding the dynamics of this kind of institutional work” (p. 1025).

### ***2.5.3 Disruption***

This final category of institutional work is concerned with actors’ efforts to disrupt the stability of standing institutions (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006). Disruptive work may be needed as prerequisites to institutional creation when potential innovation conflicts with a current one. Disruptive work is underpinned by Oliver’s (1992) discussion of deinstitutionalisation, or as she explained, “the delegitimization of an established organizational practice or procedure as a result of organizational challenges to or the failure of organizations to reproduce previously legitimated or taken-for-granted organizational actions” (p. 564). Research prior to the conceptualisation of institutional work did not demonstrate directly how actors undermine institutional arrangements (Lawrence et al., 2009).

## **2.6 Field-Configuring Events (FCEs)**

The concept of FCEs has become an important area of research, as demonstrated by recent calls for understanding the dynamic nature of organisational fields (Wooten & Hoffman, 2017). Initially defined by Meyer, Gaba, and Colwell (2005), FCEs are, “settings where people from diverse social organizations assemble temporarily, with the conscious, collective intent to construct an organizational field’ (p.467). The concept of FCEs has since evolved within the construct of institutional fields to incorporate the potential for these events to create, maintain, and disrupt institutional fields (Lampel & Meyer, 2008). Lampel and Meyer (2008) provided six formal criteria for defining FCEs. Basically, an FCE must:

1. Assemble actors from diverse professional, organisational, and geographical boundaries in one location;
2. Exist for a limited duration;
3. Provide unstructured opportunities for face-to-face social interaction;
4. Include both ceremonial and dramaturgical activities;
5. Offer actors opportunities for information and collective sense-making; and,
6. Generate social and reputational resources that can be used outside of the FCE (p.1027).

FCEs are often organised by field-level actors and have been studied in various contexts such as awards ceremonies (Anand & Jones, 2008), conferences and trade shows (Zilber, 2011), and the Olympic Games (Glynn, 2008; Thiel & Grabher 2015). FCEs present new methodological approaches for institutional scholars as the “ephemeral space within our scholarly imagination” is transformed to physical space where a field can be witnessed in action (Lampel, 2008; Wooten & Hoffman, 2017).

Most studies thus far have focused on how conferences affect organisational field structures through processes that occur during the FCE; with little attention given to the event preparation phase (Schüßler, Grabher, & Müller-Seitz, 2015). Thus, FCEs are a promising, underdeveloped area of research for scholars (Zilber, 2018).

## **2.7 Institutional Theory in Sport Management**

In connecting institutional theory with sport management, Washington and Patterson (2011) called for a joint venture, “where the sport field can be used to extend institutional theory and institutional theory can direct research in sport to questions that are currently not being answered” (p. 2). Slack (1996) argued that for sport management to keep pace with the world of sport, researchers need to be aware of current management theories and concepts, understanding these theories to support their work. Thus, researchers should heed issues that are aligned with mainstream management theory that support the concerns of individuals in current management positions (Costa, 2005).

Hinings et. al (2017) assert that, “while the concept of institutional work introduces an important element of agency into institutional theory, it is important to go beyond the classification of types of work ... to analysing what is being worked on, i.e., institutional infrastructure” (p. 190). For example, Edwards and Washington (2015) examined the establishment of College Hockey Inc. (CHI) through an institutional work perspective. They first examined the forces, actions, and events that contributed to the creation and maintenance of the third-party organisation. CHI was created as an informational and marketing resource to help the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) compete against a more established Canadian Hockey League in recruiting ice hockey players. An important factor in this study was the institutional work that was done on institutional infrastructure. Specifically, the NCAA operates in the United States where its college athletics programs abide by Title IX, a civil rights law that protects people in education from discrimination on the basis of gender. Title IX ensures that participation, scholarships, and

other benefits, including the recruitment of student-athletes are equitable between both genders (Nite, Ige, & Washington, 2019). However, CHI was funded and operated independently of the NCAA on behalf of the organisation; therefore, it did not operate under Title IX. In an effort to balance the playing field with the CHL, the NCAA commissioners responsible for creating CHI had to strategically loosen the bind of their institutional infrastructure to do so.

Nite (2016) explored institutional maintenance of the NCAA's power and legitimacy within intercollegiate athletics in the United States, as the organisation was being confronted with legitimate threats in the form of legal challenges. Framing theory was used to portray how the NCAA's framing of media messages was used strategically as a method of institutional maintenance. The primary objective of the NCAA was to maintain its perceived amateur ethos amongst key stakeholders. A progression of three distinct themes was employed through media messages by the NCAA to maintain its amateur ethos, delegitimise the opposition, defend legitimacy, and re-institutionalise the audience to beliefs that were held previously.

Dowling and Smith (2016) adopted a more holistic perspective of institutional work as it related to Own the Podium (OTP) and its development of high-performance sport in Canada. OTP was created as a temporary structure for the 2010 Vancouver Olympic Games. The researchers sought to explain how OTP became a permanent feature of high-performance sport in Canada through the identification of specific relatively minor and major forms of institutional work. An institutional work perspective showed that continuance of OTP was achieved by individual and collective efforts to institutionalise the program within high-performance sport in Canada. Using a holistic perspective of institutional work, no evidence was found of disruption (Dowling & Smith, 2016). Methods for obtaining data played a major role as their study relied on data from publicly accessible, as well as non-publicly available organisational documents. Evidence of disruption would not likely to be found from self-produced documents, as it could undermine an organisation's legitimacy.

Two studies applied an institutional work perspective in the context of mixed martial arts (MMA). First, Helms and Patterson's (2014) study found that stigma motivated actors to engage in two forms of institutional work: the construction of practices that involved production, rule, and safety work; and, the persuasion of critical audiences that included enticement, pacification, and defensive education. Second, Woolf, Berg, Newland, and



Green (2016) used institutional work to understand the sport development processes that occur at an elite MMA gym. They identified refinement work and barrier work as important processes in creating, maintaining, and disrupting MMA as an institution in the gym. Refinement work involved the efforts of actors in the professionalisation of the gym's services and service delivery. This type of work was found to simultaneously create, maintain, and disrupt the institution. Implicit requirements for membership were used as barrier work to maintain the MMA gym by managing who was accepted into the fighting community.

## **2.8 Institutional Theory on Management System Standards**

Institutional theory has been the most frequently used theoretical approach to understanding the adoption and diffusion rates of ISO 9001 and ISO 14001 (Castka & Corbett, 2015; Tuczek et al., 2018). Specifically, researchers have empirically tested the isomorphic pressures that explain why certain firms adopt these standards, with early studies focused on how isomorphic pressures influenced adoption. For example, Guler et al. (2002) found that multinational enterprises and national governments exert coercive pressures on stakeholders by only doing business with suppliers that comply with ISO 9001. Corbett (2006) surveyed early and late adopters of ISO 9001 and found that coercion was the greatest influencer in the global diffusion of the standard.

Meanwhile, Dahlmann and Grosvold (2017) explored how environmental managers at 55 different firms respond to competing institutional logics and illustrated how actors skilfully and purposively shaped competing logics. Dahlmann and Grosvold's competing logics were a market-based logic and an emerging environmental logic. They found that the latter logic was embedded through creation work, which they framed as strategic creation, opportunistic creation and conditional creation. Strategic creation referred to the incorporation of environmental management systems and new technology that directly served the environmental logic, but also indirectly aligned with the market-based logic through cost savings. Opportunistic creation was achieved through the introduction of relatively minor investments, such as energy-efficient light bulbs, that served the environmental logic without negatively impacting the organisation's market-based logic. The environmental managers who engaged in conditional work only did so once the financial performance of their firm was addressed. Dahlmann and Grosvold's study shows that institutional logics and work can be complementary, as opposed to competing views,

and that the concept of logics can help provide a way of understanding how actors shape societal institutions.

A review of the standards literature identified three broad scholarly topics within organisational studies (Brunsson et al., 2012). The literature on standardisation by organisations focused on firms that produce standards to understand how they come to exist and how they function. Standardisation is the development of systematic structural norms external to formal organisations that provide an important governance mechanism that underlies many aspects of contemporary society. For example, in the British Columbian forest industry, numerous stakeholder groups pressured the industry to create sustainable forestry management standards to ensure responsible forest management practices (Zietsma & McKnight, 2009). This stream of research focuses on how standards are adopted, diffused, implemented, avoided, and altered throughout their entire lifecycle (Brunsson et al., 2012).

Scholarly interest in how standards affect organisations increased in conjunction with the emergence of neo-institutional theory in the late 1980s and early 1990s (Brunsson et al., 2012). Research has attempted to explain why organisations adopt standards since one of the core characteristics of a standard is that they are voluntarily adopted by firms. The most common explanation has been through coercive, normative and mimetic isomorphic pressures from external organisations (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). Coercive pressures can come from government, civil society organisations, or other businesses (Brunsson et al., 2012). For example, the European Commission launched the Environmental Management and Audit Scheme (EMAS) in 1995 that acted as a coercive force by threatening to mandate this environmental management scheme with performance measures (Delmas, 2002). European companies opted to adopt less publicly scrutinised environmental management standards (BS 7750 and ISO 14001) in preparation for the more stringent EMAS (Delmas, 2002). Zietsma and McKnight (2009) illustrated coercive pressure from civil society organisations, specifically, environmental NGOs that targeted international customers of forest products to persuade and coerce British Columbian forest firms to adopt sustainable forest management practices. Multinational companies can be key actors responsible for coercive pressures usually in the form of contractual requirements (Castka & Balzarova, 2008b; Guler et al., 2002; Neumayer & Perkins, 2005).

The influence of normative pressures on the adoption of standards stems from professionalisation, where formal training requirements are specified in the form of standards (Brunsson et al., 2012; Castka & Balzarova, 2008b). Within a sport context, Slack

(1994) described how the Quadrennial Planning Process brought about changes through normative mechanisms in national sport organisations throughout Canada, which led to an increased number of professionals being employed. Mimetic isomorphism generally stems from environmental uncertainty in areas such as organisational technologies or management practices, which leads to one organisation modelling itself after another it perceives as successful and, in this particular example, had already adopted a standard (Castka & Balzarova, 2008b).

While the aforementioned role of standards has become an increasingly important public and scholarly discussion, the institutional work that goes into their formation has not received as much attention. Of the limited research that does exist, Hampel et al. (2017) categorised a small set of studies that examined the work of actors affecting standards and standard-setting processes. These studies represent an opportunity to extend research on institutional work because they are often associated with heated debates that expose several institutional strategies employed by interested actors. More importantly, these studies conceptualise standardisation as a product of institutional work.

Slager, Gond, and Moon (2012) examined the creation and maintenance of the FTSE4Good index, which is a standard established in 2001 for socially responsible behaviour within the field of corporate investment. Their longitudinal study utilised an institutional work perspective and revealed the micro-level activities through which standards acquire their regulatory power. They found that actors deployed three types of institutional work (*calculative framing*, *engaging*, and *valorising*) when designing the standard, during the legitimisation period, and while monitoring adopters. Slager et al. (2012) displayed the dynamic quality of standardisation as a continuous process due to the voluntary nature of the standard that is underpinned by various institutional actors. They also found that the actors involved are not limited to standard makers, but rather, involves a diverse group that includes standard users and third parties who maintain the legitimacy of the standard in a dynamic environment.

Helfen and Sydow (2013) conceptualised negotiation as institutional work in the formalisation of institutional standards. Their study focused on the creation of new labour framework agreements between multinational corporations and global trade unions. By examining multiple cases, Helfen and Sydow (2013) found three outcomes yielded by negotiation work: institutional creation, modification, and stagnation. The first two outcomes shared the commonality of progress towards institutional change. Where

stagnation occurred, institutional work had failed to spark progress. Helfen and Sydow's (2013) multiple case study approach demonstrated the potential for both positive and negative outcomes associated with negotiation work in pursuing institutional change.

The current study is focused on the institutional work of actors who disseminated ISO 20121 into the organisational field of GC2018. Diffusion of the standard is an important part of this process in the pre-institutionalisation stage (Tolbert & Zucker, 1996). The next section presents diffusion of innovation theory, with a specific focus on the innovation-decision process.

## **2.9 Diffusion of Innovation Theory**

Diffusion of innovation theory, as proposed by Rogers (1962/2003) seeks to understand how, why, and at what rate new ideas and technologies spread. Rogers defined diffusion as, “the process in which an *innovation* is *communicated* through certain channels over *time* among the members of a *social system*” (p. 11). This definition illustrates four distinct components of the broad diffusion process: the innovation itself, communication channels, time, and the presence of a social system.

### ***2.9.1 The Innovation***

Rogers (2003, p. 12) states that, “an innovation is an idea, practice, or object that is perceived as new by an individual or other unit of adoption.” The perceived novelty of an innovation can be dependent upon the organisation. Damanpour and Evan (1984) described innovation at the organisational level as, “...the implementation of an idea – whether pertaining to a device, system, process, policy, program, or service – that is new to the organization at the time of adoption” (p. 393). Innovations are generally categorised based on contrasting types such as technical/product (Damanpour & Evan, 1984), product/service, and radical/incremental (Gopalakrishnan & Damanpour, 1997).

More recently, Klewitz and Hansen (2014) classified sustainability innovations into three categories: process, product, and organisational. Process innovations relate to increased eco-efficiency in the production of goods and services. Second, product innovations are newly developed products or services. And third, organisational innovations relate to the reformation of processes and structures within an organisation. ISO 20121, in this view, is an organisational innovation. Rogers (2003) identify five perceived attributes of innovations that explain different rates of adoption:

1. Relative advantage: the perceived improvement of an innovation over its predecessor;
2. Compatibility: the degree to which an innovation is compatible with an adopter's existing values, needs and past experiences;
3. Complexity: the perceived difficulty of an innovation to understand and use;
4. Trialability: the degree to which a potential adopter may experiment with an innovation on a limited basis before adoption; and
5. Observability: the extent that an innovation is visible to other potential adopters (pp. 15-16).

Innovations may be intangible such as a new professional logic (O'Brien & Slack, 2004) or tangible such as the sustainable design features of a facility (Kellison & Hong, 2015). Intangible and loosely defined innovations generally have a slower rate of adoption due to their lower degree of observability (Rogers, 2003). The diffusion of a particular innovation also depends on its profitability, which becomes of less importance as the required investment for an innovation decreases (Mansfeld, 1968). While these qualities are of particular importance in explaining an innovation's rate of adoption, they assume that the innovation does not change as it diffuses. The concept of reinvention was introduced in the 1970s and refers to, "...the degree to which an innovation is changed or modified by a user in the process of adoption and implementation" (Rogers, 2003, p. 17). Of course, central to diffusion and the potential for reinvention are field-level communication channels.

### ***2.9.2 Communication Channels***

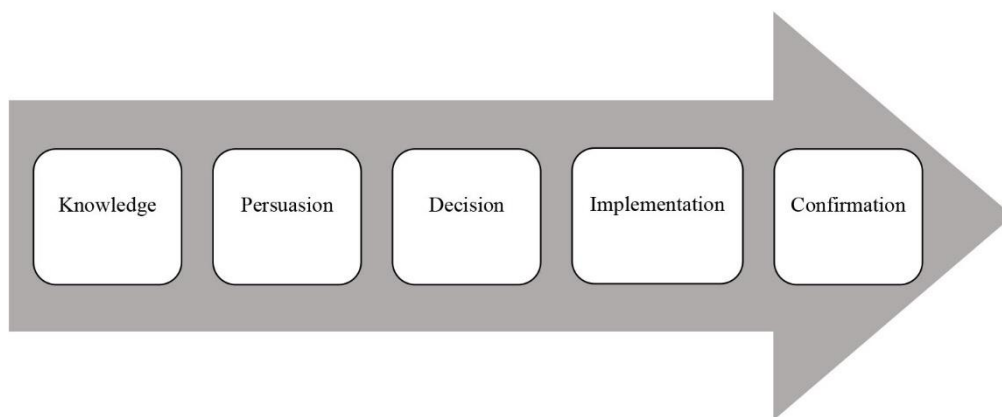
Communication channels are the conduits by which innovations are diffused to end-users. The term, "communication channel," refers to the means by which information is transferred from one individual to another (Rogers, 2003). Mass media channels such as radio, television, newspapers and so on are efficient means in creating awareness of an innovation to a large group of potential adopters. Innovations that are more complex or expensive may require interpersonal channels to persuade potential adopters, thus accelerating diffusion.

Communication exchanges that are more homophilous, where members of a diffusion network are perceived as similar in terms of socioeconomic status, religion, values, etc., serve to foster diffusion (Rogers, 2003). Conversely, communication channels

composed of members that do not perceive others as peers are described as heterophilous. Heterophily is one of the main barriers of diffusion (Rogers, 2003). Within the events sector, heterophilous networks are common because events require actors from disparate professional fields (i.e. suppliers, organisers, sponsors, etc.) to come together for relatively short periods to stage a focal event.

### ***2.9.3 Time***

In terms of innovation diffusion, time is comprised of three different subprocesses: the innovation-decision process (IDP), adopter categories, and rate of adoption. As shown in Figure 2.1, the IDP is made up of five main stages:



*Figure 2.1* Innovation-Decision Process (Adapted from Rogers, 2003).

The five main stages are:

1. Knowledge: a potential adopter learns of an innovation's existence and develops a basic understanding of how it works;
2. Persuasion: a positive or negative attitude towards an innovation;
3. Decision: activities undertaken by a potential adopter that lead to a decision in adopting or rejecting an innovation;
4. Implementation: when an adopter puts an innovation to use;

5. Confirmation: when an individual seeks reinforcement of an innovation-decision previously made.

The IDP aids understanding of the enablers and barriers of adoption from the perspective of adopters. The main goal of IDP is to decrease the perceived uncertainty of an innovation, which may lead to a higher rate of adoption. Innovations can be adopted or rejected by an individual member of a system, by the entire social system, or by individuals in a system who possess legitimacy (Rogers, 2003). The latter, authority driven decision, usually leads to the fastest rate of adoption as a “bandwagon” process may ensue (O’Brien & Slack, 2004).

Adoption of an innovation or, “... the decision to make full use of an innovation as the best course of action” (Rogers, 2003, p.177) relates to individual perceptions. Thus, adoption represents a distinct event within the overall diffusion process within a population over time and is composed of several occurrences of adoption.

#### ***2.9.4 The Social System***

A social system is a “set of interrelated units that are engaged in joint problem solving to accomplish a common goal” (Rogers, 2003, p. 23). A social system is made up of individuals, informal groups, organisations and/or subsystems. The diffusion of an innovation occurs within the boundaries of a defined social system. Social systems are structured hierarchies, as members within a social system are not equal. Social structures have norms, which are established behaviour patterns for the members of a social system (Rogers, 2003). System norms are often a barrier to change. Those individuals who are able to influence other individuals’ attitudes and behaviours are identified as opinion leaders and are, thus, able to influence changes in norms. Change does not always occur within the social system. Individual professionals who are new entrants to the social system, known as change agents, may influence the diffusion of innovations based on the different values and logics they bring with them (O’Brien & Slack, 2003, 2004). Change agents often make the social system more heterophilous, thus posing a challenge when promoting the adoption of an innovation within a social system.

Diffusion theory has been criticised due to its inability to account for institutional conditions, as decisions to adopt are based largely on an adopter’s perception of an innovation (Strang & Meyer, 1993). This line of research has portrayed diffusion as an

unproblematic, linear sequence (Seligman, 2006). Furthermore, research on failed innovations is sporadic due to the pro-innovation bias of diffusion research, which uncritically creates an assumption that an innovation should be adopted (Rogers & Shoemaker, 1971). There are two main causes of the pro-innovation bias: first, the majority of diffusion research is funded by change agents; and second, diffusion research is generally studied retrospectively, where successful cases of diffusion can be measured easier than failed innovations (Rogers, 2003). However, Rogers' (2003) conceptualisation of the IDP was of particular importance to this current study because it provided a framework for exploring the effect diffusion work had on prospective adopters of ISO 20121.

## **2.10 Management System Standards and Events: A Diffusion Perspective**

Within the academic literature examining ISO management standards, studies have primarily focused on macro-level diffusion and institutionalisation of ISO 9001 and ISO 14001 (Castka & Corbett, 2015; Tucek et al., 2018). By the mid-1990s, ISO began publishing data on adoption of its standards across countries, which led to more research examining national adoption as a way of explaining variations in organisational-level adoption, and overall global diffusion of ISO 9001 and ISO 14001 (Castka & Corbett, 2015). However, researchers have commonly focused on macro-mechanisms in cross-national comparisons with theoretical frameworks such as diffusion theory used scarcely (Castka & Corbett, 2015; Stamm, 2019).

Hashem and Tann (2007) surveyed managers of 239 manufacturing companies operating in Egypt to see what characteristics of the ISO 9000 standard were perceived as critical for adoption. They found that perceived advantage and compatibility were positively correlated with adoption, while the complexity of the standard was a significant barrier. Researchers have also been interested in the effects ISO 9001 adoption had on subsequent adoption of ISO 14001. Previous experience with voluntary standards plays a significant role in the subsequent standard adoption (Corbett & Kirsch, 2001) (Delmas & Montiel, 2008). Meanwhile, Zhu, Tian, and Sarkis (2012) found that imitation, or what DiMaggio and Powell (1983) refer to as mimetic isomorphism, was a significant driver in firm adoption of ISO 14001.

An emerging trend in the diffusion literature has been the focus on small-to-medium-sized enterprise (SME) adoption of ISO 14001. Researchers have been interested in understanding enablers and barriers of the standard's adoption due to its slow uptake among



SMEs globally (Cassells, Lewis, & Findlater, 2011; Halila, 2007; Hillary, 2004, 2006). The main perceived benefits of adoption were organisational improvements and efficiencies, increased environmental performance, and a competitive advantage. The main barriers to adoption reported by SMEs were the complexity of implementation, high costs associated with certification and consultancy, and a lack of awareness and knowledge of the standard (Cassells et al., 2011; Hillary, 2004). Specifically, documentation, preparation and maintenance, combined with a lack of training and resources, were identified as barriers for SME adoption of ISO 14001 (Cassells et al., 2011).

Halila (2007) proposed the creation of an SME network to eliminate the barriers to adoption associated with complexity, consultancy costs, and lack of awareness. The model requires that the network: is comprised of non-competitive SMEs; disseminates ISO 14001 information most relevant to SMEs within the network; allows for SMEs to decide on certification; and, is a two-stage process, where the first stage develops general implementation knowledge and the second develops SME-specific knowledge for certification.

## **2.11 Diffusion Theory in Sport Studies**

Diffusion theory has not been used as a theoretical perspective to the same extent as institutional theory within the sport management literature (Kellison & Hong, 2015; Seifried, Katz, & Tutka, 2017). There are, however, a few dispersed examples. Newell and Swan (1995) created a framework describing the diffusion process within sport organisations that connects diffusion and institutional theories. Their framework highlighted that diffusion within sport organisations is dependent on: inter-organisational networks, the role of central agencies, antecedents (i.e. strategies and structures), change processes (i.e. isomorphic pressures), and outcomes of change. Loy (1968) examined the relationship between the personality attributes of British swimming coaches in comparison to their adoption of new training methods for their athletes. He found that educational status, occupational status, professional status, and creativity were personality traits that had the greatest impact on the adoption of new techniques.

In a rare case of innovation failure, Caza (2000) examined why a new computer scoring system within Canadian amateur boxing failed to diffuse. The failure of the innovation to diffuse was ultimately the result of a lack of active promotion of the system by its supporters who instead chose, "...to let the facts speak for themselves" (p. 236).

O'Brien and Slack (1999; 2003; 2004) examined how a new professional logic diffused in the organisational field of elite English rugby union in the mid-1990s. Their work showed the interplay between diffusion and institutionalisation. The combination of uncertainty, competition, and resource demands created a threat to the legitimacy of teams within the league that adhered to the field's formerly institutionalised amateur ethos. Changes at the international level and the subsequent entrance of a powerful new actor to the field from professional soccer sparked isomorphic institutional pressures that eventually resulted in the deinstitutionalisation of the field's amateur logic and the diffusion and subsequent institutionalisation of a new professional logic. Early adoption occurred, "...not as a result of any research into the technical advantages associated with the structures and processes used in professional soccer, but more out of a fear that other clubs would successfully do so" (O'Brien & Slack, 2004, p. 29).

Hoeber and Hoeber (2012) explored the process of a community sport organisation adopting a technological innovation. They focused on classifying the determinants critical to the innovation process by adopting Damanpour and Schenider's (2006) framework of determinants and stages of innovations. They found that the determinants of technological innovation for community sport organisations are leadership commitment, pro-innovation characteristics, organisational capacity, simple organisational design, and involved and interested external parties. Kellison and Hong (2015) delved further into these determinants by providing an analysis of key influencers and their main interests, investigated the adoption and diffusion of environmentally sustainable features in new sport stadiums. They found that early adopters in this area prioritised an environmental innovation's relative advantage and compatibility over its complexity and lack of trialability and observability. However, their study, "focused on cases of successful implementation of environmental sustainability" (p. 18). Diffusion research in sport management has predominately focused on successful cases of diffusion. The barriers to innovation adoption have remained largely unexplored (Hoeber & Hoeber, 2012; Kellison & Hong, 2015). The current study develops an understanding of the role diffusion plays in the institutionalisation process by examining the intentionality and effort of diffusion actors that contribute to the diffusion of an innovation, rather than the actual adopters.

## 2.12 Diffusion Work

An institutional work perspective on standard diffusion can provide an important lens to help understand the actions and impacts of agency-infused actors (O'Brien & Slack, 2005) who make strategic choices, and thereby create institutional pressures, around decisions to adopt (or not) particular standards. Of the few that have adopted an institutional work perspective, Stamm (2019) examined the diffusion process of ISO 26000 – social responsibility. By identifying key actors and their roles, Stamm (2019) conceptualised *diffusion work* "... to designate activities which promote and disseminate an organizational standard at the field level and support its adoption within organizations" (Stamm, 2019, p. 4). While Stamm's definition focuses on the action of actors that promote standard adoption, it is only one of the possible outcomes of diffusion work. Actors may engage in negative discourse around the usefulness of a standard, which may deter potential standard adoption (Castka & Balzarova, 2008a).

As shown in Figure 2.2, Stamm (2019) characterises diffusion work through four modes based on two key factors. The first factor refers to whether the work consists of activities that could lead to the adoption of the standard (direct), or if the activities were directed to a broader audience (indirect). The second factor consists of whether work includes activities in which the standard plays a central role (explicit) or if only parts of the standard are diffused (implicit):

1. *Concrete diffusion* consists of actors working to get the standard used or adopted by a specific organisation.
2. *Broadcasting diffusion* refers to disseminating information about the standard to a broad audience through media such as traditional mass media, web-based social networks, conferences, or in educational settings.
3. *Selective diffusion* involves actors choosing elements within the standard and integrating them into a specific organisation.
4. *Conceptual diffusion* refers to actors diffusing specific concepts, definitions or recommendations to a broader audience. (Stamm, 2019).

	Direct	Indirect
Explicit	(I) Concrete diffusion	(II) Broad_diffusion
Implicit	(III) Selective diffusion	(IV) Conceptual diffusion

*Figure 2.2 Four modes of standard diffusion (Stamm, 2019, p. 150)*

Stamm (2019) focused on the first two years following the publication of the standard and found that the main influential actors were consultants, academics, standard organisations, governments and business associations. For the most part, these actors carried out uncoordinated diffusion activities that were predominately considered broad and conceptual work. Furthermore, he concluded that concrete diffusion work is limited “... in the absence of an instrument for meaningful communication about the use of ISO 26000, as well as a lack of government pressure” (p. 35).

This thesis builds on Stamm’s (2019) research and the other work cited above by examining the diffusion work of a newly-released ISO management system standard, which can be used for comparison between ISO 20121 and ISO 26000. The research particularly builds on Stamm’s work by examining the outcomes of diffusion work through the perceptions of intended standard adopters.

### **2.13 Diffusion and Institutionalisation of Event Sustainability Standards**

Getz (2009) identified an overemphasis on the economic value of events and called for a paradigmatic shift away from this commercial focus, and more to the institutionalisation of a paradigm focused on sustainability and responsibility. This last point is interesting given the debate cited earlier between Getz (2009), who called for more government regulation; and others (Pentifallo & VanWynsberghe, 2012), who argued that such coercive practices would merely result in greenwashing and ceremonial conformity.

Dredge and Whitford (2010) contended the call based upon the assumption that a neoliberal economic management paradigm was already institutionalised, and that there is an alternative sustainable paradigm to shift towards. Their main argument was founded upon Kuhn's (1962) definition of a paradigm shift as, "a reconstruction that changes some of the field's most elementary theoretical generalisations as well as many of its paradigm methods and applications [and demonstrates] a decisive difference in the modes of solution" (p. 4, parentheses added). While true, Dredge and Whitford's argument is based on semantics. Rather than a paradigm shift, Getz (2009) is referring to a shift in institutional logics from a commercial logic to a sustainability logic. As the literature shows, institutional logics do not have to be opposing to change. In fact, institutional logics such as commercial (economic) and sustainability (economic, social, and environmental) are indeed, compatible (Dhair, 2015). Thus, these logics can be aligned.

Getz' (2009) second argument is for government regulation of sustainability-related policies. Preuss (2013) posited in a similar vein for sport governing bodies and event owners, to set requirements and policy standards for the Olympic Games (Preuss, 2013). Interestingly, Dredge and Whitford (2010) contended that the institutionalisation of sustainable event management is more complex than government regulations. Institutional scholars tend to agree with the latter as these coercive pressures are susceptible to ceremonial conformity (surface adoption) and/or resistance to change (slow institutionalisation) (Lawrence et al., 2001; Meyer & Rowan, 1977). Critiques of the institutionalisation of sustainability have also posited that greenwashing would be the likely result of regulation as the main source of change (Lesjø & Gulbrandsen, 2018; Stevens, 2018). Clearly, the role of standards globally has become an increasingly important public and scholarly discussion (Hampel et al. 2017). However, the institutional work that goes into their diffusion has not received as much attention and will therefore, be a key focus of this research project.

## **2.14 Gaps in Knowledge**

The proposed research addresses several gaps in knowledge. First, despite the prominence of ISO management standards in society and as a topical research area in mainstream management literature, and calls to address sustainability within event studies (Lockstone-Binney & Ong, 2019; Mair & Whitford, 2013), there is little empirical research on ISO 20121 within both event and sport management. Although sustainability research

has risen to prominence in sport management more recently, there is still little known about sustainability standards (Mallen, 2018; Nguyen, 2018). The predominant research on ISO management standards to date has focused on macro-level diffusion ISO 9001 and ISO 140001. Scholars need to move towards examining recently released standards to address the lack of knowledge of the pre-institutionalisation stage and the roles key actors play in institutionalising and diffusing standards (Castka, 2015).

Another prominent gap in the literature is the lack of sport and event studies on field configuring events (FCEs). Institutional theory is a prominent theoretical approach to examining change phenomena in sport (Washington & Patterson, 2011), while event studies is missing theoretical development within the field (Getz, 2012a; Lockstone-Binney, 2019), the study of planned events is the core phenomenon that defines event studies, and a central element of sport. Thus, FCEs present opportunities for both fields to advance institutional theory, just as FCE research has contributed to the contemporary theorisation of issues within institutional theory (Wooten & Hoffman, 2017). The current study extends our understanding of FCEs by examining how field configuration occurs within the context of a mega event by examining the diffusion of ISO 20121 within the organisational field under study.

How are you extending our understanding of FCEs through looking at ISOs

The status of research employing institutional work concentrates on intended effects, with analyses based primarily on retrospective accounts embedded in interviews and archival data (Lawrence et al., 2013). To understand the messy day-to-day practices of institutional work, research employing less-used research methods may help shed new light on the study of institutional work (Raviola & Norbäck, 2013). “We need to attend to the experience of individuals as they engage in, and are subjected to, institutional work” (Lawrence et al., 2013, p. 1029). Thus, with respect to the sport and event management field, research that develops new knowledge around how the institutional work of individual actors impacts the diffusion of a prominent new management standard is clearly warranted.

Within the field of organisational institutionalism, one major criticism has been the lack of influence that scholarly research has had outside of academic settings in industry (Hampel et al., 2017; Miner, 2003). Lawrence et al. (2013) advocated for future researchers to examine experiences of actors as they engage in institutional work does not consider the issue of whether those efforts are successful in shaping institutions; have no effect on them; or have significant, but unintended, consequences (Lawrence et al., 2009). However, Zilber

(2013) posits that, “methodologically, tying institutional actions with their consequences requires a retrospective research design” (p. 88).

To contribute to the gaps identified above, this study adopts qualitative research methods in an exploratory endeavour. The release of ISO 20121, which coincided with the formation of GC2018’s organising committee (GOLDOC), created a unique research opportunity to examine the diffusion work of ISO 20121 through a field-configuring event.

## **2.15 Research Aims and Objectives**

The research aims for this thesis were driven by an aspiration to develop a practical understanding of the emerging phenomenon of sustainable event management. ISO 20121 is a transnational standard that presents a systematic approach to the adoption of sustainable event management practices. This standard was also the foundational tool used by GOLDOC to aid the delivery of a sustainable GC2018. The main aim of this thesis was to analyse how actors went about disseminating the standard within the events industry of the GC2018 host region. While the traditional approach to institutional research primarily explores why change occurs, the primary focus of this thesis was to examine how standards diffuse. As such, the objectives of this thesis were:

- To explore understandings of how sustainable practices are diffused within an event and if they extend beyond the event;
- To detail how diffusion actors impact or are impacted by their position in the field;
- To examine the relationships between heterogeneous actor groups;
- To explore the extent to which institutional arrangements can be altered in the planning phase of a mega-event.

## 2.16 Research Questions

As the literature review illustrates, research in the areas of standards, sustainability, and institutional work is robust and growing. ISO 20121 presents a new path to extend knowledge in regard to the first two areas and an opportunity to fill gaps that were identified in the institutional work literature. In connecting these three concepts, the main research question is proposed to extend knowledge in these areas:

***What role does diffusion play in the institutionalisation process of an innovation within an organisational field?***

To facilitate examination of this process of institutional change, the following sub-questions are proposed in the research context of GC2018:

1. Who are the key actors involved in the pre-institutionalisation of ISO 20121?
2. How do key actors diffuse a management system standard within an organisational field?
3. How do perceptions of potential adopters towards a management system standard affect adoption decisions?

## 2.17 Chapter Summary

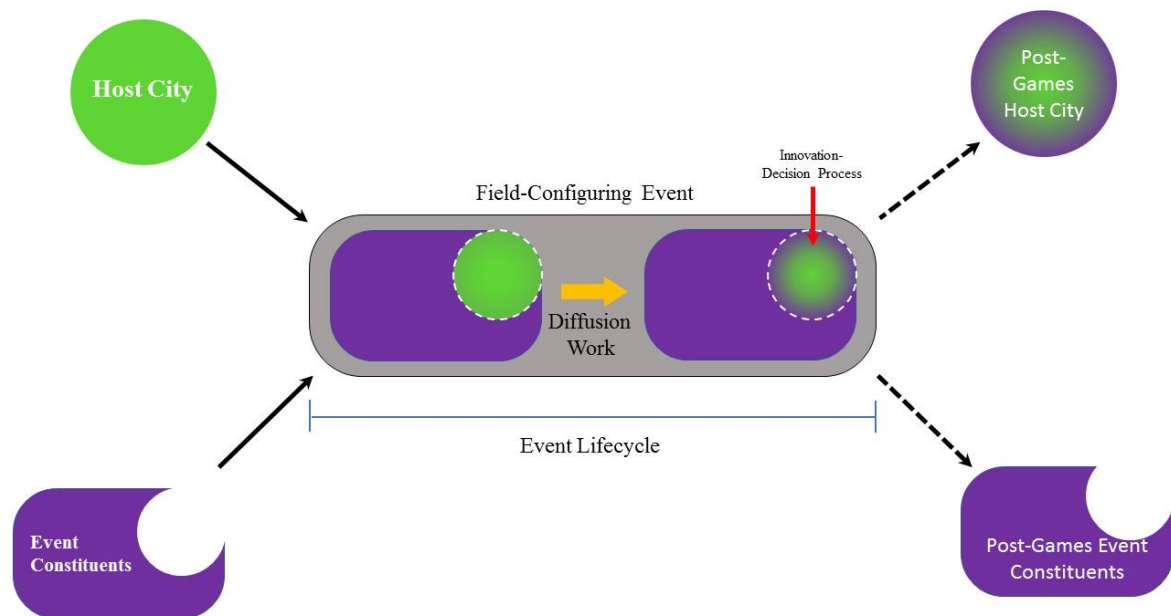
The theoretical approach for this research combines perspectives from institutional theory and diffusion of innovation theory. These concepts were essential to develop an understanding of innovation-diffusion through a field-configuring event of “...extraordinary size and complexity” (Thiel, 2015, p. 237).

This study utilised the Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games as to analyse the diffusion of a particular innovation: ISO 20121 (2012). As Chapter Six will demonstrate, the standard qualified as an innovation within Roger’s (2003) diffusion theory as it was “perceived as new” (p. 36) by potential adopters. The following sub-sections provide an overview of how the *FCE innovation-diffusion model* was applied to address the research questions in a three-phase research design. The first stage utilised Zietsma et al.’s (2017) typology of organisational fields to develop a comprehensive understanding of the field as institutional work is “...significantly affected by actors’ subject positions, and by field conditions” (p. 405). A detailed analysis of the field allowed for the identification the key actors involved in the diffusion of ISO 20121. The second stage employs Stamm’s (2019)



conceptualisation of diffusion work to examine to understand how key diffusion actors attempted to disseminate and promote adoption of the standard within GC2018. Finally, to understand the perception of adopters and potential adopters towards the standard, the third stage employed the innovation-decision process (Rogers, 2003).

Figure 2.3 demonstrates how elements from these theoretical perspectives have been combined into a three-phase model to inform the analysis of the data for this research. The model depicts how an innovation can be diffused through a field-configuring event (FCE) by key diffusion actors such as the event owner and the organising committee of the event.



*Figure 2.3* Field-Configuring Event Innovation-Diffusion Model

## **Chapter Three: Methodology and Research Methods**

### **3.1 Introduction**

This study examined how a transnational event sustainability standard diffused through the Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games (GC2018). The overarching research question addressed was: *What role does diffusion play in the institutionalisation process of an innovation within an organisational field?* A further three sub-research questions were developed to guide the study:

- i) Who are the key actors involved in the pre-institutionalisation of ISO 20121?
- ii) How do key actors diffuse a management system standard within an organisational field?
- iii) How do perceptions of potential adopters towards a management system standard affect adoption decisions?

This chapter describes and justifies the research methodology and methods used to address these questions. This chapter is comprised of five sections. The chapter begins with an overview of the research methodology guiding this study and is discussed with a focus on research paradigms, ontology, and epistemology. The reasons for using a single case study as a research method to address the research questions is then discussed, followed by a detailed description of the data collection and analytic procedures used to gather and code data. The chapter concludes with an examination of issues relating to trustworthiness in qualitative research (e.g. validity and reliability) and ethical considerations.

### **3.2 Research Methodology**

While often used synonymously, research methodology and methods are two very different terms. Research methods refer to the techniques used for data collection and analysis. Conversely, research methodology is a broader term that explains the overarching philosophical principles adopted by the researcher. This section discusses the principles adopted by the researcher to justify the study.

All researchers carry an underlying set of principles that are engrained within their research (Creswell, 2013; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). These principles are derived from a combination of ontological (the nature of reality), epistemological (how knowledge is produced), and methodological (the process of research) beliefs (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). The sum of these beliefs is described as a research paradigm (Guba & Lincoln, 1994) or

philosophical assumption (Creswell, 2013). Essentially, these assumptions act as, “a basic set of beliefs that guide action” (Guba, 1990, p. 17). Social science researchers are not only expected to recognise their underlying philosophical assumptions but should also discuss these within their research (Creswell, 2013).

Guba and Lincoln (1994) propose five major interpretive paradigm categories that underlie social science research and are applicable across all forms of sport management research (Edwards & Skinner, 2009): positivism, post-positivism, critical theory, constructivism, and participatory. Each of these research paradigms is underpinned by different ontological, epistemological, and methodological assumptions (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). The borders separating these competing worldviews are becoming increasingly distorted (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). It is not unusual for sport management researchers to incorporate multiple frameworks at a time. Nevertheless, the adoption and discussion of a particular worldview has become quite common in this field of research (Edwards & Skinner, 2009). This section provides an overview of the five major schools of contemporary research as provided by Guba and Lincoln (1994). Subsequently, attention is focused on the epistemological, ontological, and methodological paradigm of constructivism, as it most aligns with the assumptions of the study.

### ***3.2.1 Positivism***

Positivist researchers assume an objectivist ontology. Objectivism suggests that reality is governed by something that is external and independent of social actors. Within this view, theory is universal and not bound by a specific context (Skinner, Edwards, & Corbett, 2014). Objectivist researchers believe that knowledge already exists and is waiting to be found through careful observation and experimentation. Human behaviour can be observed and measured through research methods such as surveys and questionnaires. A positivist theoretical perspective assumes that all knowledge is waiting to be uncovered and the role of the researcher is to discover this knowledge while remaining separate from the research field (Edwards & Skinner, 2009; Gratton & Jones, 2014). It is a realist approach that views knowledge as objective and verifiable but has since weakened its grasp on the scientific community as it is perceived to not adequately deal with concepts such as uncertainty (Edwards & Skinner, 2009). A positivist approach searches for generalisations. Thus, positivist researchers aim to explain social activity as naturally reoccurring entities, which reinforce social institutions as predictors of behaviour (Fay, 1975).

### **3.2.2 Post-Positivism**

In general, post-positivism includes all frameworks that are positioned against positivism and views research as circular, as opposed to linear (Edwards & Skinner, 2009). Furthermore, post-positivist research assumes an imperfect reality due to the complex nature of phenomena and imperfect human intelligence (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Post-positivist research is more open to qualitative methods. However, epistemological, ontological, and methodological approaches greatly differ as post-positivist research is an umbrella term that covers a wide range of worldviews. Denzin and Lincoln (2011) describe a period following the emergence of post-positivism in which they label the blurred genres (1970-1986). It is within this period that qualitative research began to expand, providing researchers with a variety of worldviews to employ such as critical theory and constructivism (Edwards & Skinner, 2009).

### **3.2.3 Critical Theory**

Like post-positivism, critical theory is not a distinct school of analysis, but rather it encompasses several worldviews such as feminism and materialism (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). The commonality among varying critical theory approaches that makes it a distinct and major school of inquiry is its epistemological position as a value-determined type of inquiry (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Researchers and their subjects are unique; therefore, the knowledge gained through research is significantly dependent upon who they are. Furthermore, rather than simply understanding and explaining phenomena, critical theorists view the researcher's role as a catalyst for change (Edwards & Skinner, 2009).

### **3.2.4 Participatory**

The participatory worldview is the most recent major school of inquiry identified by Lincoln and Guba (2000). The unique quality of participatory research is the cooperative generation of knowledge by researchers and individuals or groups. Thus, research is done *with* subjects, as opposed to *on* subjects. Participatory research requires a closer and more equal relationship between researcher and participants, as both are involved in the entire research process (Edwards & Skinner, 2009). This collaborative approach has a greater potential to generate more practical knowledge. However, the participants of this study were not able to provide the commitment necessary to conduct a participatory study.

### 3.2.5 Constructivism

Constructivism is the view that:

... all knowledge, and therefore all meaningful reality as such, is contingent upon human practices, being constructed in and out of interaction between human beings and their world and developed and transmitted within an essentially social context.... [for constructivists] meaning is not discovered, but constructed (Crotty, 1998, p. 42)

As outlined in the previous chapter, this study addresses sustainable event management with a specific focus on the diffusion of ISO 20121. When considering the personal perceptions, assumptions and values of the researcher, constructivism offers the most appropriate underpinnings for this research. In regards to the four philosophical assumptions previously mentioned, the constructivist worldview assumes a relativist ontology, a subjectivist epistemology, a hermeneutic/dialectic methodology (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Guba, 1990) and an individualistic-valued axiology (Creswell, 2013).

#### *Constructivist Ontology: Relativism*

Ontology refers to the assumptions a researcher possesses and relates to the nature of reality and its characteristics (Creswell, 2013). A relativist's ontology comes from the position that, "realities exist in the form of multiple mental constructions, socially and experientially based, local and specific, dependent for their form and content on the persons who hold them" (Guba, 1990, p. 27). Knowledge is constructed from our own lived experiences, as well as through interactions with others. To produce knowledge that is reflective of a subject's reality, researchers must participate in the research process (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). Since meaning is constructed by individuals through their experiences, differing meanings may exist for the same phenomenon.

A relativist ontology justifiably fits with the context of this study. Consider what ISO 20121 is; a document written in a universal language so that it can be implemented into any sized event that may occur anywhere in the world with the aim of producing a more sustainable event. The most effective method of understanding the institutional work of actors in the diffusion of this standard was to explore the experiences of individual and collective actors who have, in some capacity, worked with the standard or have been directly impacted by it. To access this knowledge, constructivists take a subjectivist epistemological approach (Guba, 1990).

### *Epistemology: Subjectivism*

The epistemological assumption refers to the researcher's perceived relationship with that which is being researched (Creswell, 2013). A constructivist prefers to employ a subjectivist perspective "inquirer and inquired into are fused into a single (monistic) entity. Findings are literally, "the creation of the process and interaction between the two" (Guba, 1990, p. 27). Researchers and what they investigate are connected, and the knowledge researchers construct will always be influenced by the lived experiences of both the researcher and the subject(s); thus, knowledge is known through the subjective experiences of people (Creswell, 2013).

The primary source of data collection for this research came through interviews that explored the lived experiences of individual and collective actors who were directly or indirectly impacted by the staging of GC2018. Since the researcher's role was to interpret these data subjectively, it was inevitable that personal experiences and background contributed to the knowledge derived through this study.

### *Methodology: Hermeneutical and Dialectical*

The social construction of knowledge is dependent upon the interaction between and among the researcher and participants. The hermeneutical/dialectical process refers to the techniques used to understand written or verbal communications (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). This inductive approach commonly relies on methods such as interviews, observations, and analyses of texts. Guba and Lincoln (1994) identify the importance of the "provision of vicarious experience" (p. 114) in the transfer of knowledge process. The case study is a commonly utilised methodological approach to providing the researcher with a vicarious experience and is the methodological approach used for this study. Specifically, the researcher employed a holistic, single-case study methodological approach to examine the work carried out by key actors responsible for the diffusion of ISO 20121.

## **3.3 Research Method**

The previous section detailed the philosophical assumptions and beliefs of the researcher that underpinned the study. This section focuses on the tools and techniques used to collect and analyse data. As this study is qualitative in nature, several qualitative methods exist, with case study research most appropriate. The data collected in this study was sourced from semi-structured interviews, participant observations, and relevant documents. This

section discusses the processes and procedures used to collect and analyse the data from these sources.

### ***3.3.1 Qualitative Research***

Historically, quantitative research has dominated both sport management (Amis & Silk, 2005) and event studies (Crowther, Bostock, & Perry, 2015) research. The qualitative approach to research provides a means to use individual perceptions and experiences as a lens to explore social phenomena (Creswell, 2009) and has become a generally accepted research method within sport management. Qualitative methods are commonly used when the research is exploratory in nature and a topic is new, has never been addressed with a certain sample or group of people, and/or existing theories do not apply with the particular sample group or group of people (Morse, 1991). Both the context and theoretical concept of this study fit within this space. ISO 20121 is in the early stages of adoption and has not been widely investigated, especially, when compared to similar ISO standards, such as ISO 9001, 14001, and 26000. Furthermore, from a theoretical perspective, the concept of diffusion work is also in the early stages of theory development and thus, also fits these criteria (Stamm, 2019).

Among qualitative methods available to select from, the researcher employed a single case study approach. This strategy of inquiry allows a researcher to explore a program, event, activity, process, and/or one or more individuals in depth (Creswell, 2009). The case is bound by a spatial and temporal scope, during which the researcher collected detailed information using a variety of data collection procedures (Clarkson, 1995). The focus of this study is on field-level diffusion, with data collection limited to September 2015 to November 2018.

### ***3.3.2. Thematising the Study***

According to Yin (2014), what separates case study research from other designs like ethnography and grounded theory is the engagement of existing theory. Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) recognise this step as thematising; recognising that prior theory may be used in various ways in case study research. Walsham (1995) argued that theory is used in one of three ways in case study research: (a) as an initial guide to design and collect data, to create a theoretical framework that accounts for existing knowledge in the area; (b) as part of an iterative process of data collection and analysis, with theoretical understanding being modified in the light of findings from the data; and, (c) as a final product of the research.

For the purpose of this thesis, the justification of the use of institutional work theory is represented best by the first rationale provided by Walsham (1995). Institutional work is being used to create a theoretical framework (refer to section 2.17), with the early diffusion of sustainable event management practices examined from an academic perspective.

### 3.3.3 *Selecting the Case*

The case selection process is linked with two decisions: what cases and how many cases. Yin (2014) identified five rationales for choosing a single-case study: *critical*; *unusual*; *common*; *revelatory*; and *longitudinal*. The first rationale, selecting a *critical* case is based on how well the case can contribute to the knowledge of the theory being used for the study. This single-case approach allows for a more intensive focus on diffusion work and can confirm, challenge, or extend the theory from a contextual perspective that has not yet been investigated (Yin, 2014). The second rationale represents a case that deviates from theoretical norms and is therefore, deemed *unusual*. Few major sporting events are comparable in size to GC2018, with the Commonwealth Games being the largest sporting event hosted by Australia in the last decade. Therefore, investigating the diffusion of ISO 20121 within the context of this mega event enables potential actors/groups to learn from the findings of this case. The *common* case objective is to capture the circumstances and conditions of an everyday situation. This rationale is in line with the nature of institutional work: studying actors and their day-to-day “work” efforts. The fourth rationale is the *revelatory* case, which is the observation and analysis of a phenomenon previously inaccessible to social science inquiry. ISO 20121 was published in 2012, with limited research subsequently produced regarding its implementation.

Meanwhile, Stamm’s (2019) conceptualisation of diffusion work, as a process within institutional work, presents a novel theoretical perspective to study the diffusion of a transnational sustainability standard. The last rationale is the *longitudinal* case that studies the same single case at different points in time. Examining the diffusion work of key actors required in depth-analysis such as participant observation of GOLDOC’s annual Sustainability Forums over a three-year period. Colyvas and Jonsson (2011) justify longitudinal case studies of diffusion and institutionalisation, stating “scant research has tackled the spread and depth of these types of behaviours ... there are numerous theoretical reasons for investigating what happens to objects, subjects, and settings in the process of diffusion” (pp. 30-34). The current study sought to understand the process of diffusion of



ISO 20121 and how its diffusion effects the institutionalisation of the standard. This process is examined not only through the diffusion work of key actors, but also how their diffusion work impacted the perceptions of potential adopters toward the standard; thereby, justifying the selection of a single case study for this research.

The most recent iteration of the Commonwealth Games made an appropriate research site for this study. The next section provides a contextual overview of this single-case study that was selected for this study.

### ***3.3.4 Overview of the Case Study: The Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games (GC2018)***

In November 2011, the city of Gold Coast was awarded the rights to host the 2018 Commonwealth Games, beating out Hambantota, Sri Lanka with a 43 to 27 vote. It marked the fifth occasion in which the Commonwealth Games were hosted in Australia, 12 years following the previous instalment of the Commonwealth Games in Melbourne. Although the Games have become seemingly commonplace in the UK (six), Australia (five), and Canada (four), as they have combined to stage 15 of the previous 21 Commonwealth Games, GC2018 marked the first time ever the Games were hosted in a regional city.

The international multi-sport event was mainly staged in the city of Gold Coast, from 4 to 15 April 2018. Over the 11 days of competition, 6,600 athletes and team officials from 71 nations competed in 18 sport disciplines across 18 venues. The Queensland Government (2019b) reported that 1.2 million tickets were sold to spectators, with a global broadcast audience estimated at 1.5 billion people, and was delivered at a total net cost of AUD 1.862 billion (Queensland Government, 2019b).

The GC2018 sport program strived to reflect the CGF's commitment to inclusion, diversity, and sustainability detailed in the organisation's new strategic plan "Transformation 2022" (CGF, 2015). Indeed, the para-sport program was the largest in Commonwealth Games history as 38 medal events took place at GC2018, 18 more than the Glasgow 2014 Games. Also, women were equally represented in medal events for the first time at a major international multi-sport event. Since the sport program already reached a maximum of 17 sport disciplines, the organising committee needed approval from the CGF to include beach volleyball as the 18<sup>th</sup> sport. The addition of beach volleyball was important for the city as it was seen as a leveraging opportunity to showcase the beaches of the Gold Coast to a global audience (GOLDOC, 2016).

In the pursuit of the promises made in the bid, and to help stage a sustainable GC2018, the implementation of ISO 20121 was established as the primary objective within GOLDOC's Sustainability Policy:

- (1) To implement the international standard ISO 20121: Event Sustainability Management Systems;
- (2) To report on GOLDOC's sustainability performance in accordance with the Global Reporting Initiative's Event Organiser Sector Supplement (GRI EOSS);
- (3) To communicate GOLDOC's leadership in sustainable event management (GOLDOC, 2017, p. 1).

Although GOLDOC was not the first mega-event organising committee to implement the standard, it was the first to do so well in advance of staging the event. ISO 20121 was published in June 2012; well into the planning stages of the two previous mega-events that also implemented the standard, the London 2012 Olympic Games and Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games. GOLDOC's justification for implementing the standard is stated in its Sustainability Framework document titled *Towards a sustainable GC2018*:

The implementation of the ISO 20121 international standard will help ensure that sustainability considerations are embedded within organisational decision-making and will facilitate the identification of appropriate and practical actions to be taking. By embedding these processes into our way of working, we can ensure that sustainability becomes an integral part of GOLDOC's management system (GOLDOC, 2016, p.6).

Given the significance of ISO 20121 to GOLDOC's delivery of a sustainable Commonwealth Games, the organisation's commitment to communicate its leadership in sustainable event management, and ISO 20121 as the central contextual focus of this thesis, GC2018 offered a suitable case study to examine the diffusion of ISO 20121 within the host community of the Games.

### **3.4. Research Design**

To answer the research questions raised in the study, the following three-phase research design was developed and implemented by the researcher:

1. Key ISO 20121 diffusion actors were identified through an analysis of the GC2018 organisational field. In this phase of the research, a thorough analysis of relevant organisational documents and media reports were used to establish the organisational field and identify key diffusion actors as well as potential adopters of the standard.
2. The researcher conducted interviews with key diffusion actors that were identified in the first phase. The purpose of this second phase was to examine how key diffusion actors disseminated ISO 20121 within the GC2018 organisational field through the analysis of interviews, organisational documents, and media reports.
3. The final phase of this study examined the effect the diffusion work had on potential adopters within the organisational field. Potential adopters were identified in phase one as members of the local events industry who were within the GC2018 organisational field. Interview questions were aimed to understand how these potential adopters first became aware of ISO 20121, their perceptions of the standard, and what played a role in their decision to adopt or reject it.

### **3.5. Data Collection**

#### ***3.5.1 Semi-Structured Interviews***

Primary data for this thesis were collected through semi-structured interviews. This type of interview has an initial question followed by unscripted probes (Edwards & Skinner, 2009; Gratton & Jones, 2014; Yin, 2014). Semi-structured interviews allow the researcher a moderate level of control over the interview when compared to the complete control offered by structured interviews and almost complete absence of control with unstructured interviews. Semi-structured face-to-face interviews are widely used within the sport and event management fields, and are considered an effective means to obtain data (Brunt, Horner, & Semley, 2017; Edwards & Skinner, 2009). Within the semi-structured interview process, the interviewer asks multiple main questions to the interviewee that focus on one

or several themes related to the research topic. These main questions are open-ended and supported by follow-up probes to obtain in-depth data as subsequent probes are tailored to the specific interviewee.

Semi-structured interviews were preferred over structured interviews for this research as the interviewees were drawn from a variety of different experiential and professional backgrounds. Structured interviews were deemed inappropriate as the researcher would not have been able to effectively explore the interviewees' perspectives and experiences as this type of interview limits interactions between interviewer and interviewee (Yin, 2014). Refer to Appendix B for the semi-structured interview guide used for this study.

### *Participant Recruitment*

The interview participants were selected intentionally based on their knowledge and experience with ISO 20121 and/or their professional role related to staging GC2018. The first group included participants who were involved directly in creating ISO 20121 and had previous experience implementing the standard but were not directly involved with GC2018. The second group of participants were professionals involved directly with the staging of GC2018; some had experience with ISO 20121, while others did not. The initial participants were identified either through publicly accessible strategic documents published by GOLDOC, or they attended the annual sustainability forum staged by GOLDOC. The latter is explained in more depth in the participant observation section. The recruitment of most participants relied on snowball sampling. Snowball sampling is used to recruit new participants who have been identified by referrals from original participants based on their interconnectedness (Gratton & Jones, 2014).

Once potential participants were identified, they were contacted either by phone or email. These contacts provided opportunities for the researcher to explain the aims of the study, determine their willingness to participate, address any concerns they may have had, and organise a time and place for the interview to take place. If participants could not be reached by phone, they were contacted through email. In this case, potential participants were provided with a brief introduction and summary of the study as well as the researcher's contact details. All interview participants were provided with a participant information document (refer to Appendix C) to formally explain the research, as well as a consent form (refer to Appendix D), which they were asked to sign and return directly to the researcher prior to the face-to-face interview or email to the researcher prior to a telephone interview.

As indicated in Table 3.1, 32 interviews were conducted by the researcher, with GOLDOC (n = 9, 28.1%) and Gold Coast City Council (n = 5, 15.6%), the most represented organisations. Participants included representatives from various GC2018 sporting venues, as well as individuals from the Queensland State Government, academics, and event sustainability professionals. These participants represented different organisations that were mostly based on the Gold Coast and in Brisbane. A few respondents were based in the United Kingdom, the United States, and Canada. These interviews were conducted over the phone or through Skype.

Table 3.1

*Interview Respondents*

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Number of Interviews</b>
Gold Coast City Council	9
GOLDOC	5
GC2018 Competition Venues	5
Event Sustainability Professionals	6
Other	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>

*The Interview Process*

Semi-structured interviews follow an interview guide that encompassed a set of broad questions that included themes needed to be explored in the interview (Gratton & Jones, 2014; Yin, 2014). The overall aim was to create a natural free-flowing conversation, aided by the interview guide, to allow respondents to feel comfortable with the interview process. Depending upon the respondents' answers, the main questions were further explored using probes to allow the interviewee to delve into specific themes they felt comfortable discussing, as well as exploring new themes. The researcher had the ability to

change the flow of questions or ask new questions when interviewees deviated into topics not related to the study.

The interviews took place between September 2015 and November 2017. Semi-structured interviews facilitated a conversational interview style with the ordering and number of questions unique to each interview. Interview lengths varied from 22 minutes to 1 hour and 45 minutes and averaged approximately 45 minutes each. The face-to-face interviews took place at locations that were convenient for the participants. As previously mentioned, four interviews were conducted over the phone or through Skype, as these participants were located outside of the Gold Coast local area. The interviews were digitally recorded once participants provided consent. The researcher encouraged participants to agree to face-to-face interviews if feasible because respondents were more open to questioning as a better rapport was established when compared to phone or Skype interviews.

The researcher manually transcribed all interviews and, following research ethics protocols, erased the original recordings after transcriptions were reviewed for accuracy. Interviews were transcribed as soon as possible after they were conducted as they provided the researcher initial exposure to the data, which influenced the quality of questioning in subsequent interviews. Names were removed from the interview data to ensure the anonymity of the participants. All data was safely stored on Bond University's secure servers. Furthermore, the timely transcription of interviews was essential as interviewees were provided with the opportunity to review the transcripts of their respective interview to ensure their accuracy.

### ***3.5.2 Participant Observation***

A second source of data acquisition was from participant observations. As Edwards and Skinner (2009) stated, "observation entails the systematic noting and recording of actions and behaviours (both verbal and non-verbal), events, and objects in the social or work setting that is the research site" (p. 103). While direct observation allows the researcher to remove themselves from the research setting to maintain objectivity, this study used participant observation. Participant observation is a data collection method where the researcher immerses him or herself in a research setting as both participant and observer. This type of data collection is advantageous as it covers actions in real-time, as well as covering the case's context (Yin, 2014). Participant observations afforded the researcher an

opportunity to develop a rapport with subjects to aid in the recruitment of interviewees for the semi-structured interviews.

#### *Description of the Observation Sites*

In total, the researcher visited four sites from October 2015 to October 2017 to make observations on a total of five different occasions. Three of the five occasions were annual sustainability forums hosted by GOLDOC. The researcher was invited as a stakeholder. Prior to attending, the researcher contacted the host of the event to seek permission to take field notes. Each of the annual meetings were three hours in duration. The first meeting was held at the Southport Aquatic Complex in October 2015. The following two annual meetings were held at GOLDOC's headquarters located in Bundall, Gold Coast in October 2016 and October 2017. The overall aim of these forums was for GOLDOC to engage with community stakeholders who were invested in the sustainability of GC2018. These annual forums provided the researcher opportunities to observe interactions between participants pertinent to the research context, be involved in those activities, and recruit participants for the semi-structured interviews.

The fourth observation was at a monthly sustainability meeting at a GC2018 facility. The meeting occurred in October 2015 and lasted approximately 1 hour in length. The interviewees from the facility scheduled the research interview prior to the monthly sustainability meeting and offered the researcher an opportunity to attend and take notes. The final research site was an industry engagement meeting in Bundall, Gold Coast. GOLDOC scheduled this meeting in October 2015 with the overall aim of introducing ISO 20121 to the local hotel industry. An interviewee invited the researcher to attend and take notes. The meeting lasted approximately two hours.

#### **3.5.3 Document Analysis**

The third source of data was the document analysis of relevant organisational documents and media reports. This source of data was advantageous for three reasons. First, it allowed the researcher to investigate the field prior to the time period in which participant observations and interviews took place. Second, it aided in the recruitment of participants by identifying potential individuals for interviews. Third, it allowed for an unobtrusive method of data collection since the researcher was not directly involved in producing the data (Brunt et al., 2017; Edwards & Skinner, 2009). Together, these multiple sources

provided a rich set of data from which robust conclusions could be developed. Table 3.2 provides document types and sources.

Table 3.2

*Document Types and Sources*

<b>Document Type</b>	<b>Source of Document</b>
GOLDOC (10 Documents)	GC2018 Public Website
Legacy and Leveraging (6 Documents)	Gold Coast City Council Public Website Public documents provided by interviewees
ISO 20121 (3 Documents)	One document purchased by the researcher from the ISO website. Two documents obtained from website
Gold Coast Bid (2 Documents)	Publicly Accessible
CGF (6 Documents)	Accessible on the CGF website
Media Reports (40 reports)	Publicly Accessible

### **3.6 Data Analysis**

Data collected from interviews, participant observation and document analysis were coded using template analysis (TA). TA was developed by King (1998) and has become widely established in healthcare research (King, 2012; Hardy, King & Rodriguez, 2014). However, due to the need to develop a greater depth of knowledge within institutional studies, further work has advanced TA (Provan, Rae, & Dekker, 2019). TA is a type of thematic analysis that, “balances a relatively high degree of structure in the process of analysing textual data with the flexibility to adapt it to the needs of a particular study” (King, 2012, p. 426). TA presents an iterative approach to thematically analysing qualitative data



through the creation of coding templates and is often used to analyse interview transcripts “with 15 to 30” interview participants being common. As the current study included semi-interviews with 32 participants, TA presented an appropriate data analysis technique for this research. Furthermore, the researcher’s constructivist epistemological position and qualitative methodological approach to the current research through a single-case study justified the use of TA for data examination and interpretation (King, 2004).

Template analysis involved developing a coding template that summarised themes identified by the researcher within empirical data and then organised in a meaningful and suitable manner. Within TA, King (2012) stated that the term “theme” refers to the repetitive features of a participants’ accounts that characterise experiences and/or perceptions relative to the research question/s. Coding, in this view, “is the process of attaching a label (code) to a section of text to index it as relating to a theme” (King, 2012, p.431). Thus, these codes are important in a data set as they assist in the identification of emerging themes.

TA involves the creation of “a hierarchical template of themes that are used to support the writing up of findings. The template is developed in an iterative process whereby it is initially based on the coding of a subset of transcripts, and then modified as further coding is undertaken” (Hardy, King, & Rodriguez, 2014, pp. 13-14). Analysis often starts with some *a priori* codes, which identify concepts strongly expected to be relevant to the analysis and as discovered in the literature. However, these *a priori* codes may be changed or deleted if they do not fit with the actual empirical data. In this study, the initial *a priori* codes were defined based on the institutional work literature. The template was used to analyse three transcripts. The researcher then read through the transcripts and coded the segments that corresponded to an *a priori* code. From there, preliminary codes were added to phrases within the interview that appeared to relate to matters that addressed the study’s research questions; regardless if they categorically fit into the institutional work framework. For example, the initial transcript reading revealed several instances in which respondents viewed sustainability as an environmentally-focused matter. New themes that were identified in addition to the *a priori* codes were included in the initial template. This was done after the initial coding of a subset of the data, the first three interviews from the field study. This created an initial template that was then applied to the whole data set and then modified where necessary when reviewing every single transcript. Although Stamm’s (2019) conceptualisation of diffusion work was central to this study, it did not exist when the initial template was created and was, therefore, not included in the initial template.

As predicted by King (2012) “inadequacies in the initial template will be revealed, requiring changes of various kinds” (p.438). For example, within the current study, it was clear that respondents who were potential and actual adopters of ISO 20121 had a view of the standard that was shaped by their exposure to it. Roger’s (2003) innovation-decision process was included in the third template to attach meaning to the perceptions and experiences of potential and actual adopters. Refer to Appendix E for the final version of the template used for this study.

Once the final template (version four) was defined and all transcripts had been coded accordingly, the template served as the basis for the interpretation of the data set, which also informed the structure of writing-up the research findings. The data analysis process was aided by a computer-based qualitative data analysis software called NVivo. NVivo is software that allows for the coding and grouping of data into thematic codes and categories. The data were transcribed into Microsoft Word and uploaded into the NVivo library to be accessed and analysed.

### **3.7 Trustworthiness**

The validity and reliability in qualitative research are generally referred to as the trustworthiness of the project. Guba and Lincoln (1981) discussed four criteria that are typically used to provide assurances of the trustworthiness in qualitative research.

*Credibility* is the consistency of the study and provides assurances that the study was done properly (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). Credibility is similar to reliability in quantitative research. The research collected data from multiple resources, encompassing semi-structured interviews, participant observation from field visits, organisational documents, and news articles in an effort to ensure the study’s credibility.

*Transferability* is comparable to external validity that determines the extent to which the findings can be applied in other settings. While multiple-case studies enhance the perceived transferability of studies (Eisenhardt, 1989), the uniqueness of this case did not afford the researcher an opportunity to examine multiple cases. Specifically, GOLDOC was the first organising committee of a mega-event to adopt ISO 20121 well in advance of staging GC2018. However, Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggested that “sufficient descriptive data” (p.298) suffices in the transferability of a study. The following three chapters aim to provide the reader with sufficient descriptive data that represents a large amount of qualitative data collected for this study.

*Dependability* is the extent to which the research methods were stable, and the results reflect the outcomes of the phenomenon being studied (Polit & Beck, 2016). Dependability is another measure of reliability (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). The use of data from multiple sources can be considered as a technique for obtaining dependable data. The template analysis method used to examine the data ensured that the research methods remained stable throughout the study. Furthermore, computer software assisted in the management, coding, and storing of data, which contributed to the dependability of the study.

*Confirmability* is another process used to assure the validity of the study. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), confirmability is the verification that individuals in reading the findings can be assured that the report is an accurate depiction of the facts and, to the greatest extent possible, does not reflect the researcher's beliefs, theories, or biases. The use of multiple sources, much of which is publicly accessible, can also be cited to ensure confirmability of the study. Furthermore, the researcher's advisors coded portions of the data to confirm the findings.

Lincoln and Guba indicated that the aim of trustworthiness provides the support that the findings of the study are germane to the study. However, Merriam and Tisdell (2015) stated that trustworthiness of qualitative research is ultimately left to the readers who determine which parts apply to their contexts.

### **3.8 Ethical Considerations**

The researcher received approval to conduct the study from the Bond University Human Research Ethics Committee (0000015268). As part of this process, an informed consent form for individuals who agreed to participate in the interviews was prepared. All participants signed consent forms, which provided assurances to them that the study would be conducted ethically. To ensure that the interviewees received ethical treatment during their participation, they were assigned numbers and the numbers randomised both during the interview and in writing the findings. As access to the interview transcriptions were limited to my advisor and myself, the confidentiality of all participants was maintained. Documents for the study were collected from publicly available databases. The researcher was invited to observe at annual GOLDOC sustainability forums, a quarterly sustainability meeting with a GC2018 venue, and a hotel-industry ISO 20121 information forum. These meetings did not require Ethics committee approval.

The researcher will securely store data used from the interviews, documents, and observations for five years after the approval of the dissertation. At that time, any paper copies of data will be shredded and data on the external hard drive will be erased using a shredder program. Data stored will be de-identified and stored in a secure filing cabinet at Bond University.

### **3.9 Chapter Summary**

This chapter has presented the methods used to collect and analyse the data for the study. The research method used in this study was a single case study that allowed the researcher to explore the diffusion of ISO 20121 within the host city of 2018 Commonwealth Games. The data collection included semi-structured interviews with 32 individuals who had knowledge and experience with ISO 20121 and/or who had a professional role in staging GC2018. Template analysis was used to thematically analyse qualitative data collected for the study. The researcher addressed issues of trustworthiness; including credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability; that reflected the reliability and validity of the research. Finally, the chapter discussed ethical issues that were addressed to protect the interviewees from any harm while participating in the study.

The following three chapters present the results and discussion of this study's findings. Chapter Four identifies the key diffusion actors of ISO 20121 through an analysis of the organisational field. Chapter Five provides a detailed examination of the diffusion work used by key actors to disseminate information and potentially impact ISO 20121 adoption. Finally, Chapter Six presents a detailed analysis of how diffusion work affected the perceptions of potential adopters towards the standard.



## **Chapter Four: Key Diffusion Actors Involved in the Pre-Institutionalisation of ISO 20121**

### **4.1 Introduction**

The aim of this chapter is to provide a better understanding of the roles played by key actors involved in the diffusion of ISO 20121 within a field-configuring event (FCE). The chapter begins with an analysis of the GC2018 organisational field to, as Scott (2014) put it, provide greater clarity of the institutional boundaries germane to this organisational study. This is followed by a discussion of the key actors that impacted the diffusion of ISO 20121, ultimately addressing the first research question: *Who are the key diffusion actors involved in the pre-institutionalisation of ISO 20121?*

Castka and Corbett (2015) stressed the need for future research to explore the early, or pre-institutionalisation, phase of diffusion in ISO standards. They stated that, “there is little formal knowledge about the early days of diffusion, where decisions by a few major players (firms, governments, or other stakeholders) can have an outsize influence on subsequent diffusion patterns” (Castka & Corbett, 2015, p. 162, parentheses in original). The characteristics of ISO 20121, as a relatively new ISO standard in comparison to other ISO management standards, combined with the limited number of adopters, placed the standard within what Tolbert and Zucker (1996) would term, “the pre-institutionalisation phase.” Tolbert and Zucker argued that the pre-institutionalisation stage is characterised by few adopters and a lack of consensus on the value of a given innovation or change phenomenon. Furthermore, as the standard was published shortly after the formation of GC2018’s organising committee, GOLDOC, the standard fits within Rogers’ 2003 definition of an innovation; “... an idea, practice, or object that is perceived as new by an individual or other unit of adoption” (Rogers, 2003, p. 12). Ultimately, this chapter portrays seven actor groups that engaged in information dissemination and consensus-building activities that impacted potential adoption decisions regarding ISO 20121.

### **4.2 The Commonwealth Games: Defining the Field**

As outlined in Chapter Two, Zietsma et al. (2017) identified two types of organisational field – exchange fields and issue fields. While Zietsma identified three subsets of issue fields, the one that is particularly relevant to this study is that of an interstitial issue field, which consists of, “overlapping positions wherein members of different fields

interact with one another because they share a common interest or issue” (Zietsma et al., 2017, p. 24). In the context of this study, GC2018 is an interstitial issue field that emerged at the intersection of two pre-existing organisational fields: The Commonwealth Games Movement; and, the Gold Coast events industry. GC2018 can also be characterised as the field-configuring event (FCE) in this research as, for the host city of Gold Coast, it was the catalyst for the “restructuring of civic, social and business networks” (Lampell & Meyer, 2008, p. 1033). Hinings et al. (2017) suggested that examining how fields intersect and allow diffusion of infrastructural elements between fields, such as ISO 20121 in the case of this research, is an important area of research for understanding institutional change and stability.

The FCE literature has predominately focused on the processes that occur during the event and their outcomes; with little attention given to the event preparation phase (Schüßler et al., 2015). Lampel and Meyer (2008) define FCEs as, “temporary social organizations such as ... tradeshow, professional gatherings, technology contests, and business ceremonies” (p.1026). The “temporal and spatial compression of interactions” (Hardy & Maguire, 2010, p. 1382) between mostly homogenous actors intuitively limit their capacity to stimulate field-configuring activity. However, mega-events require collaboration between actors in different organisational fields for an extended period of time well before and after the actual competition period. Within this study, for example, the Commonwealth Games Federation (CGF), the Australian Government, the Queensland State Government, the Gold Coast City Council (GCCC), and the Australian Commonwealth Games Association entered into an agreement to host the 2018 Commonwealth Games in November 2011. The heterogeneity of actors and the large scale of mega-events extend the usual field-configuring “temporal reference points” well beyond the event itself (Glynn, 2008; Thiel & Grabher, 2015, p. 232). This heterogeneous collection of actors was the context within which diffusion work for ISO 20121 was to take place. While the duration of the Gold Coast Commonwealth Games was only 11 days (4 April to 15 April 2018), field-configuring activity was evident during the bidding and preparation phases of the event. Thus, it is important to delimit the field to identify the ‘who’ and ‘how’ questions of diffusion work related to ISO 20121 as, “...fields only exist to the extent in which they are institutionally defined” (Zietsma et al., 2017).

#### ***4.2.1 Purpose and Focus of the GC2018 Field***

The general purpose of the Commonwealth Games Federation is to, “... deliver inspirational and innovative Commonwealth Games and Commonwealth Youth Games, supported by a dynamic Commonwealth Sports Cities Network” (CGF, 2015b, p. 24). Within Zietsma et al.’s (2017) typology of field types, GC2018 fits the characteristics of an issue field, which includes the sub-issue field types of interstitial, competitive, and bridging issue fields. This section demonstrates how the GC2018 field encompassed characteristics of all three sub-issue field types. The GC2018 field formed around the successful orchestration of the planned event that required collaboration, planning and implementation among formerly disparate actors; whereas, more traditional notions of organisational fields contain a focal population of comparatively homogenous actors and their exchange partners (DiMaggio & Powell, 1984). The collaboration of various industry (e.g. construction; hospitality), social movement (e.g. Indigenous Reconciliation; wheelchair accessibility), and professional (e.g. event managers; place marketers) exchange partners were involved in staging GC2018. These actors did not necessarily all create exchange relationships with each other, but rather, they each contributed to the overall formulation and delivery of the event.

While the general purpose of the GC2018 field was apparent, how the field was created, and how actors maintained its general purpose to stage a successful GC2018, was the product of institutional work from various actors. In the bid phase for the 2018 Commonwealth Games, members of different fields formed around an emerging opportunity to win the rights to host the event; thereby, creating an interstitial field. As Zietsma et al., (2017) contended, an interstitial field consists of coordination among diverse actors in response to an emerging opportunity. The prospect of staging the largest planned event in the Gold Coasts’ history, and the largest event hosted in Australia since the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games, required coordination among five diverse groups: Australian Federal Government, the Queensland Government, Gold Coast City Council (GCCC), Australian Commonwealth Games Association (ACGA), and the Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games Bid Company (GCCBC) (Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games Bid Ltd, 2011)). After the Games hosting rights were won, the relationship between actors changed from a bid-focus to a legacy perspective. These central actors within the GC2018 field had varying legacy aspirations for their respective organisation’s involvement in the Games; especially when taking into consideration that this new legacy phase brought the CGF to the table.



The planning of legacies marked the emergence of aspects of a bridging issue field, as actors sought to ensure their respective organisational objectives would be achieved through hosting the Games. Bridging issue fields are, “inherently cross-jurisdictional and will remain so over time, such as the governance of common resources or shared issues” (Zietsma et al., 2017, p. 402). Respondent20, a member of the Commonwealth Games Unit within the GCCC, described how his unit’s management of legacy issues served as a bridging mechanism:

We’re also the coordination point for the GC 2018 partners... In the legacy space, we’ve actually got six partners that we’re trying to coordinate across, so that we’re all united on a legacy front and are working together towards common legacy aspirations... We have gone through a pretty extensive process particularly throughout last year where each of the partners brought to the table what their top priorities were in terms of legacy. Now, each of those partners are going to have different mandates as they’ve got different audiences. But there is a lot of crossover. We then focused on those crossovers by negotiating and prioritising what’s important to each partner, so that we ended up with one shared list.

While coordination within the field focused on maximising opportunities for Games Partners, peripheral groups sought to, “...get [their] foot in the door” (Respondent10). For instance, Respondent13 discussed how she used her position embedded in both GOLDOC and a community organisation, to address the city’s accessibility issues:

I was at the sustainability meeting with GOLDOC in March 2016. There must have been 100 people there ... The first question they asked as was, “What is the reason most people would want to come to the Gold Coast?” 80% of the people raised their hand and said beaches. But we didn’t talk about wheelchair accessibility to the beaches at all ... I’ve brought this [beach accessibility] project up to GOLDOC and the legacy committee to pick up as well.

Respondent13 went on to discuss how her strategy to get “buy-in” was through drawing on previous Games’ accessibility legacies. As she explained:

I’ve talked about how we can build off of Manchester and Glasgow ... The one thing the Manchester Games did really well was dealing with one of their biggest leisure sports in England and that's fishing off the canals. You couldn't do that in a

wheelchair because it's pretty soft around those canals and you have to navigate through the forest. They set up these wooden platforms to deal with that issue that are still there to this day ... Glasgow focused on accessible housing and they did it quite well. So, I've been trying to use that to bring our (the Gold Coast) accessible accommodation problem to the table.

The strategic use of an iterative approach to “selling” her project based on previous Commonwealth Games’ legacies was necessary as accessibility was one of the numerous social movement issues that actors tried to leverage through the Games. Respondent22 discussed the competitive environment of incorporating social issues into the Games through his experience of seeking support from GOLDOC for an environmental project:

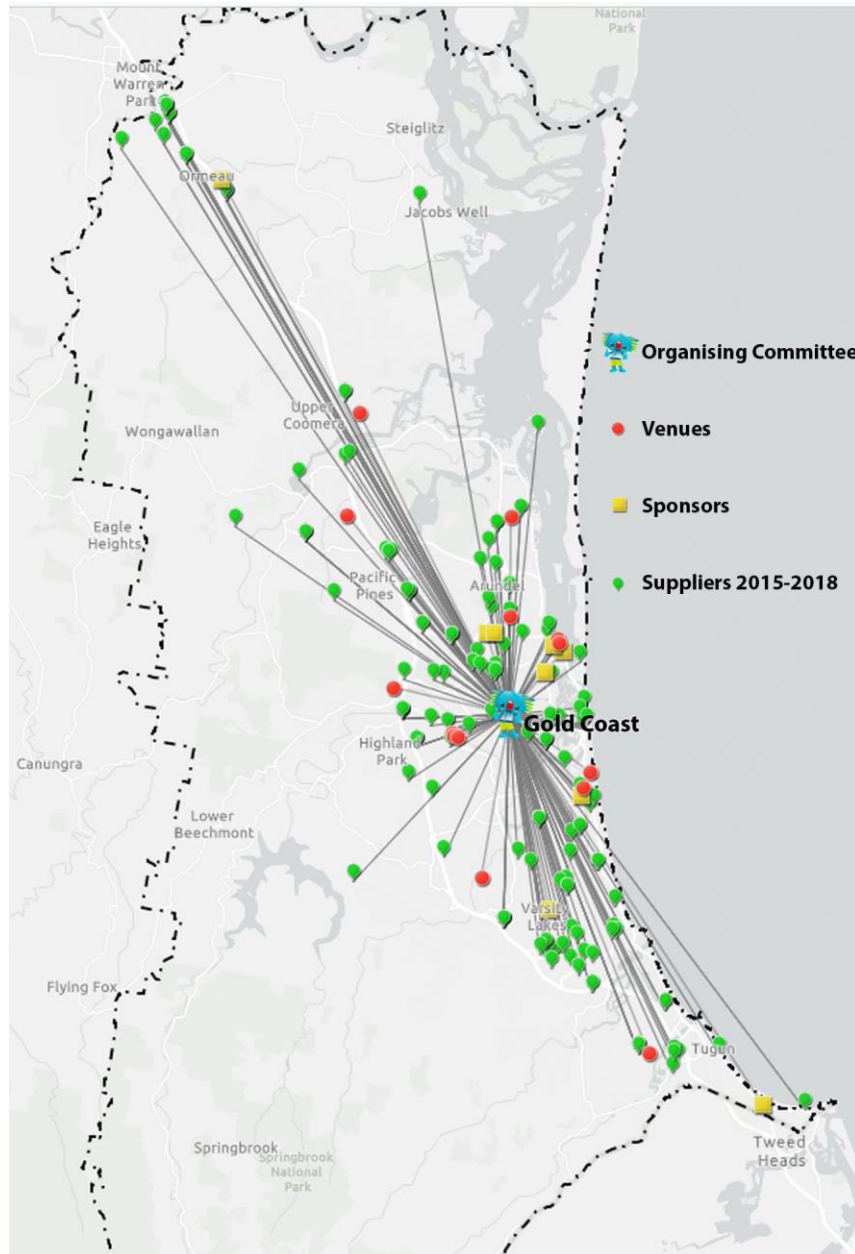
I'm trying to get this document together for my solar legacy proposal... I think there's something like 1300 registered non-profit organisations on the Gold Coast...so trying to deal with all those different legacy ideas, I can't even get my head around it.

While the general purpose of the field was staging a successful GC2018, diverse underlying objectives were apparent due to the heterogeneous mix of actors involved. Boundaries were formalised and maintained to blend competing issues around the delivery of an “inspirational and innovative” GC2018. For example, on October 11, 2016, GOLDOC Chair Peter Beattie explained at a Gold Coast business breakfast event the social issues – homelessness and domestic violence – that would be targeted through the hosting of GC2018. This action was an example of a key actor delimiting field boundaries around particular social movement fields. Schüßler, Rüling, and Wittneben (2014) found that when an issue-based field fragments to attend to various sub-issue activities, actors become increasingly disconnected from the field's original purpose. As this section illustrates, the necessity to establish boundaries is equally, if not more, apparent in the context of mega-events.

#### ***4.2.2 GC2018 Field-level Boundaries***

In comparison to the limited previous research (Glynn, 2008), the GC2018 data illustrate two important boundary considerations to add clarity to field-level change through mega-events. First, the temporal reference point of the FCE begins with an official

announcement of a prospective host city's bid. Thiel and Grabher (2015) described three distinct temporal phases that extend well beyond conventional FCEs, including mega-event policy, project construction, and urban regeneration phases. However, these temporal boundaries are not conducive to cross-field comparisons as they are, "...based on the singularity of the flagship projects within their field" (Thiel & Grabher, 2015, p. 229). Thus, Thiel and Grabher, concluded that temporal boundaries of mega-events as FCEs are founded upon field configuration rather than the actual staging of the Games. Second, governance is an integral component of field-level boundaries that requires actors to do institutional work. The current study included governance as a key boundary of the GC2018 field as boundary organisations – the Queensland Government, GCCC, GOLDOC and the CGF – actively formalised and managed the field. Boundary organisations act as gatekeepers of an organisational field as they control access into it (Zietsma et al, 2017). For example, within the GC2018 field, contracts formalised entry, and the Queensland State Government passed legislation that managed this particular boundary. Thus, the GC2018 field-level boundaries were established based on the spatial, temporal and governance characteristics related to the event, as shown in Figure 4.1, and each is elaborated upon in the ensuing sections.



*Figure 4.1. GC2018 Field-level Boundaries*

Figure 4.1 provides an illustration of the GC2018 field (refer to <http://arcg.is/1OWKXj> for a more detailed version). The Gold Coast municipal border represents the spatial boundary of the field as it was the host city for GC2018. The data for this spatial boundary were accessed through the Gold Coast City Council (GCCC, 2018). Supplier data from 2015-2018 were accessed through the Queensland State Government website, as all public contracts over AUD 10,000 are required to be publicly accessible online (Queensland Government, 2019a). The temporal boundary is not accounted for on

this particular map, as it is only an image extracted from a geographic information systems (GIS) program the researcher used to generate the map. The following section details the GC2018 field boundary.

### *Spatial*

Glynn (2008) established the host geographic community as the organisational field within her study on the Atlanta 1996 Olympic Games. Although previous research has shown that field-configuration can occur outside of the host city (Chien et al., 2018), the current study focused on field-level diffusion of a transnational standard within the host city. The individual and organisational actors within the GC2018 field came from both within and outside the geographical boundaries of the host city. Actors that came from outside of the Gold Coast were considered “new actors.” For instance, the Commonwealth Games Federation is headquartered in the United Kingdom (UK) but was a central actor within the GC2018 field.

### *Temporal*

Although the Gold Coast was not awarded the 2018 Commonwealth Games until November 2011, there were prior instances of significant field-configuration that were directly attributable to the bid for the Games. The City of Gold Coast bid for the 2018 Commonwealth Games began on 22 August 2008 when then-Queensland Premier Anna Bligh announced an official bid for the Games. In April 2009, the Queensland Government agreed to exchange land ownership of the Southport Pool (renamed the Gold Coast Aquatic Centre) for Carrara Stadium (renamed Metricon Stadium) (ABC, 2009a). The deal not only helped secure the Games, but it was also necessary for the Gold Coast’s acquirement of an Australian Football League (AFL) license for a professional team (ABC, 2009b). Less tangible field-configuration was also evident during the bid phase. Respondent31, a member of GCCC, illustrated how GC2018’s temporal boundaries extended beyond the actual event when he discussed the lasting effects of building relationships during the bid process:

We had a high level of trust, professional trust, that we were able to deliver in the bid process. A fairly small team went through pretty good feasibilities about what we needed to deliver, certainly from a venue point of view. There’s a significant legacy in maintaining a partnership or a relationship that goes beyond the Games.

Beyond this study, Leopkey, Salisbury, and Tinaz (2019) illustrated examples of field configuration during the bid process by focusing on Candidate City legacies generated from losing bids of the Olympic Games. Thus, in a temporal sense, the organisational field

surrounding a mega-event begins formation when a prospective host city officially launches its bid. Transitioning from the “talk to walk” dichotomy further validates this position as candidate host cities are expected to provide evidence of tangible outcomes already achieved within their respective bids (Lesjø & Gulbrandsen, 2018).

### *Governance*

Field governance refers to, “the formal mechanisms that enable or constrain field activity and dynamics” (Hinings et al., 2017, p.175), and as such, constitute an important subset of institutional infrastructure. Individual and organisational actors are subjected to multiple formal governance entities such as various levels of government, unions, and industry associations. Actors can also be susceptible to informal governance. For instance, Woolf et al. (2016) described informal regulative practices on gym memberships performed by influential actors who managed acceptance into the focal community through various processes identified collectively as “barrier work.” This term, “barrier work,” refers to the efforts of actors in maintaining field-boundaries (Wolf et al., 2016). This section is concerned with governance as a form of barrier work that shaped the boundaries of GC2018. As Respondent8 described, it left actors that perceived themselves as outside of the field asking, “how are we going to get on the bus?”

The CGF needs host cities to stage the Commonwealth Games, while host cities need the CGF’s authorisation to stage the event; therefore, the relationship between the CGF and host cities of the Commonwealth Games can be characterised as a mutually dependent partnership. However, the CGF ensures it establishes governance over central actors within host cities. Although the partnership is mutually dependent, there is a clear power imbalance in favour of the CGF that is established in the CGF’s documentation. For instance, the CGF’s Constitution safeguards itself from any financial risk involved in staging the Games:

The Organising Committee ("OC"), the Host CGA, the Host Government(s) and the Host City will be jointly and severally responsible for organising and staging the Commonwealth Games and for all commitments related to the organisation and staging of the Games, including, without limitation, all financial commitments relating to the organisation and staging of the Games in accordance with the Host City Contract and the CGF Documents.

Although the Games are organised and funded by the host city, the CGF controls the distribution of the event’s broadcasting rights:

These are revenues earned by the CGF and then redistributed to the OC for services rendered in the organisation of the Commonwealth Games, arising from the sale of broadcast rights for the Commonwealth Games. The amount of such contribution shall be decided by the CGF Executive Board (CGF, 2011b, p. 58).

The monetary value of broadcast rights is largely dependent upon the ability of the CGF and host cities to preserve the relational and symbolic systems generated through the Games (Scott, 2003). Relational systems, in this view, refer to networks of inter-organisational linkages that shape and reshape boundaries (Scott, 2003). Meanwhile, symbolic systems accentuate those boundaries through dramaturgical elements such as symbols, meanings, phrases that those within the field coalesce around (Glynn, 2008; Lampel & Meyer, 2008). Glynn's (2008) study focused on how relational and symbolic systems connected actors within the spatial boundaries of the focal field. While Glynn (2008) stated that these systems drew boundaries between actors, "by identifying members and criteria for membership," (p. 1121) how they were created and maintained was not clearly defined. Hinings et al. (2017) described the importance of understanding the institutional infrastructure of an organisational field in relation to institutional work:

Our point is that institutional infrastructure is an integral part of institutional work. When creating, maintaining or transforming a field, the kinds of institutional work being done are critically about institutional infrastructure, the institutions of governance, power, legitimacy and control (p.190).

As this thesis is focused on how actors engage in diffusion work aimed to increase awareness and adoption of ISO 20121, the institutional infrastructure of the GC2018 field was important in establishing what constituted diffusion work and what was a result of the conditions of the GC2018 field.

Institutional studies are commonly undertaken with an elaborate "... set of actors or structures which have the role of judging, governing or organizing other actors within the field" (Hinings et al., 2017, p. 174). However, the governance of the actors within the GC2018 field became established over time. Since the CGF does not have jurisdictional authority in Australia, it required the collaboration of several organisational actors to create and maintain field-level governance of the GC2018 field; most notably, the GCCC, GOLDOC, and the Queensland State Government helped establish the institutional

infrastructure that governed members of the field. The CGF's governance role within the GC2018 field was limited until immediately following the announcement of the Gold Coast as the official host of the 2018 Commonwealth Games on 10 November 2011. The constitution defines the host city contract as:

... the contract between the Federation, the Host CGA, the Host City, the OC, the Host Government and any other parties as the Executive Board deems necessary regarding the organisation of a Commonwealth Games which is signed at the General Assembly immediately after awarding of a Commonwealth Games (CGF, 2018, p.30).

Beyond the Host City Contract, the CGF establishes its regulative power over host cities through the following documents:

**The CGF Constitution** establishes the overall objects, fundamental principles, functions, offices, organisations, roles and policies of the CGF and for the Commonwealth Games. The Constitution is modified only by the General Assembly;

**The Regulations contain a range of procedural and control rules**, provisions and procedures which, in conjunction with the Constitution, establish the basis on which the CGF and its constituents including OCs and Candidate Cities must act. The Regulations are amended by the CGF Executive Board;

**The Code of Conduct** establishes the basis on which members of and those associated with the CGF must act to preserve the integrity, image and reputation of the CGF and the Commonwealth Games. It sets the overall policy and standards of conduct (CGF, 2011b, p.5).

The CGF's regulative power for GC2018 was not exclusive to those signatories of the host city contract, but rather extended to any affiliated entity:

Any person, organisation or other entity not directly affiliated with the Federation but engaged in the organisation of the Commonwealth Games in any way whatsoever shall be bound by the provisions of the CGF Documents, the Host City Contract and shall abide by the directions of the Executive Board (CGF, 2018, p.33).

The boundaries of the GC2018 field were created and maintained through formalised agreements such as host city and supplier contracts, and sponsorship agreements.



While the CGF has substantial control over its ability to govern relational systems, in general, intellectual property laws are not adequate to ensure the protection of Games-specific trademarks. Thus, the CGF requires assurance from Candidate Cities to preserve the Commonwealth Games' relational and symbolic systems. Host cities are required to pass legislation to guarantee this protection, as detailed in the Candidate City Manual (2011):

Guarantee(s) confirming that the legislation necessary to effectively reduce and sanction ambush marketing, eliminate street vending, control advertising space and air space during the period of the Commonwealth Games, will be passed no later than 30 June 2014 (CGF, p. 74).

Subsequently, the *Commonwealth Games Arrangements Act 2011* was passed and commenced on 1 January 2012 (Queensland Government, 2016). The Act established the creation of GOLDOC as the organising committee and set legal protection of Commonwealth Games trademarks. This was followed by the *Commonwealth Games Arrangements Regulation 2013*, which registered official Games-related images and references (Queensland Government, 2017a). While these acts expired shortly following the conclusion of the Games, the *Major Events Act 2014* provided a significant field configuration for future events in the host state of Queensland (Queensland Government, 2017b). The Act further ensured the preservation of relational spaces for the Games by enacting penalties to major events and controlled areas (near where the event takes place). These 35 penalties have varying degrees of fines from AUD 1,261.50 (not reporting an offence under the Act) to AUD \$250,000 (flying an aircraft, including remote-controlled, over restricted air space). The Act also provides governmental control over expediting the construction of major event areas, a requirement in the CGF's Candidate City Manual. These boundaries created an environment of exclusivity for Games constituents such as suppliers and sponsors; thereby, maximising their monetary value. However, these constituents were also governed through contractual agreements with GOLDOC and Queensland State Government, which included meeting the requirements within GOLDOC's Sustainability Sourcing Code (GOLDOC, 2017).

Organisational fields can be re-configured by boundary work; that is, attempts by actors to create and disrupt boundaries (Zietsma & Lawrence, 2010). For instance, Duignan, Down, and O'Brien (2020) illustrate how local small business entrepreneurs challenged formalised boundaries to strategically place themselves in exclusive event spaces at the Rio

2016 Olympic Games in order to take advantage of economic opportunities presented by the Games. In the context of the current research, while much of the barrier work was aimed at ensuring the protection of Games trademarks, it was also characterised by demonstrations of the CGF's greater regulatory power over relational space and systems. For example, the CGF denied Queensland Premier Annastacia Palaszczuk's request to give a speech at the opening ceremony of GC2018. The controversial decision sparked outrage across numerous GC2018 partners including Australian politician, Robert Swarten, who described it as, "a kick in the guts," stating in the Brisbane Times:

We've spent \$3 billion on this ... The woman with a Scottish accent who's a paid representative of this Commonwealth Games (CGF President, Louise Martin), they haven't put any money into it. Our premier is being told that it's not protocol. I say they can shove the protocol where the sun doesn't shine (Jackson & Layt, 2018).

The GC2018 field reverted back to its pre-existing state on "dissolution day," which was formalised in the contractual obligations of the host city and CGF (Post Games, 2018): "The undersigned also agrees to abide by the terms of the CGF Constitution and Regulations and Host City Contract throughout the term of the lease agreement with the OC" (CGF Manual, 2011, p.149). The IOC states a similar position on the cessation of its position as a boundary organisation:

From the time of its constitution to the time it is dissolved, the OCOG must comply with the Olympic Charter, the contract entered into between the IOC, the National Olympic Committee and the host city (Host City Contract) and the instructions of the IOC Executive Board (IOC, 2009).

The governance of GC2018 was dynamic throughout the planning, delivery, and dissolution phases. The GC2018 field expanded as members entered through formal agreements with GOLDOC and the CGF. Conversely, the field contracted as formal agreements expired. As FCEs are temporally bounded, the GC2018 field reached its temporal endpoint upon the dissolution of GOLDOC on 31 December 2018 (Queensland Government, 2019b).

In the context of FCEs, the temporal boundary of the organisational field encompassing GC2018 field was extensive as the duration of FCEs' is normally limited, "...running from a few hours to a few days" (Lampel & Meyer, 2008, p. 1027). However,

as evidenced in this section, field configuration due to GC2018 began 10 years prior to the staging of the Games.

Due to their heterogeneous actors, cross-field dynamics, and potential for entry of elite actors, Zietsma et al., (2017) suggested that issue fields are more likely than exchange fields to be sites of widespread institutional change. They stated, “overall, then, we would expect to see more change in issue fields relative to exchange fields, though the change target may, in fact, be an exchange field. We would also expect many issue fields to be more temporary than exchange fields” (Zietsma et al., 2017, p. 408). As institutional change is more likely to occur in issue fields relative to exchange fields, it could be argued that they present greater opportunity for actors to diffuse innovations. In addition, Furnari (2016) proposed that,

When the levels of mutual dependence and power imbalance between two fields are both high, institutional change is likely to occur, and when it occurs it is likely to involve the partial or full replacement of the less powerful field’s institutions with the dominant field’s institutions (p. 35).

As an interstitial issue field that is characterised by mutual dependence and power imbalance between organisational fields, according to the work of both Zietsma et al (2017) and Furnari (2016), GC2018 could be characterised as a formidable site for diffusion. The following two chapters explore Furnari’s prediction of the partial or full replacement of the less powerful field’s institutions with those of the more dominant. First, Chapter Five establishes ISO 20121 as an element of the institutional infrastructure of the CGF. Then, Chapter Six examines the adoption of ISO 20121 among organisation within the less powerful GC2018 field. As this study focuses on the diffusion of ISO 20121, the next section details the field conditions relevant to the case.

### **4.3 Field Conditions for the Diffusion of ISO 20121**

The relational systems that form between host cities and global organisations like the IOC or CGF are an important element in the creation and diffusion of sustainability standards within the Olympic Games (Lesjø & Gulbrandsen, 2018). Previous research has focused on the isomorphic pressures that the IOC and organising committees have encountered to adopt sustainability standards (Ross, Leopkey, & Mercado, 2018). What is less understood is how sustainability standards diffuse beyond organising committees and

into the wider events sector of host cities (Nguyen, 2018). The latest collaboration between ISO and the Organising Committee of the London 2012 Olympic Games (LOCOG) resulted in the creation of ISO 20121, which was, “developed by the event industry for the event industry” (ISO, 2012 p.26). ISO 20121 was introduced to the GC2018 field as a new standard; therefore, it was considered an innovation (Rogers, 2003). As an interstitial issue field, the GC2018 field presented an “arena” (Schüßler et al., 2015, p. 165) for innovation diffusion as:

Interstitial issue fields will feature much faster, and likely more radical change, because these fields are typically unorganized to begin with. Because, they draw infrastructure elements from several other fields, change is likely to follow nonlinear processes and its diffusion throughout the field is likely to be spotty (Zietsma et al., 2017, p. 412).

As ISO 20121 is an industry specific-standard, potential adopters come from the event industry. In this study, the diffusion of ISO 20121 occurs at the intersection of the organisational fields constituting the Gold Coast events industry and the Commonwealth Games Movement, converging around the GC2018 interstitial issue field, as illustrated in 4.2. The event industry is characterised by a coordinated exchange of products and services among interaction partners for the overall purpose of staging planned events (Zietsma et al., 2017; Getz, 2016). The Commonwealth Games Movement also constitutes an organisational field as it includes the following constituents who interact for the overall purpose of staging the Commonwealth Games: the CGF, 41 International Federations, 71 Commonwealth Games Associations, and one organising committee for each iteration of the Commonwealth Games. This intersection of the two fields presented a pathway for field-institutional change as the GC2018 field emerged out of the “alignment” (Zietsma, et al., 2017) of the two organisational fields. Zietma et al. (2017) contended that interstitial issue fields “are often fragmented during their emergence, isomorphic pressures are weak, and a field identity is ambiguous and emerging. Boundaries are highly permeable. Diffusion is uncertain” (p. 401). However, the CGF is one of a number of sport organisations characterised as what Parent and Foreman (2008) called an “iterative organization, wherein the structure and activities of the organization are episodic in nature (p. 222). Thus, the alignment of the interstitial issue field is likely to draw from the Commonwealth Games Movement’s “... legitimate institutional infrastructure” as, “ ... the role of the CGF in providing supervision

and oversight ... ensures greater levels of operational continuity” (Foreman & Parent, 2008, p. 235).

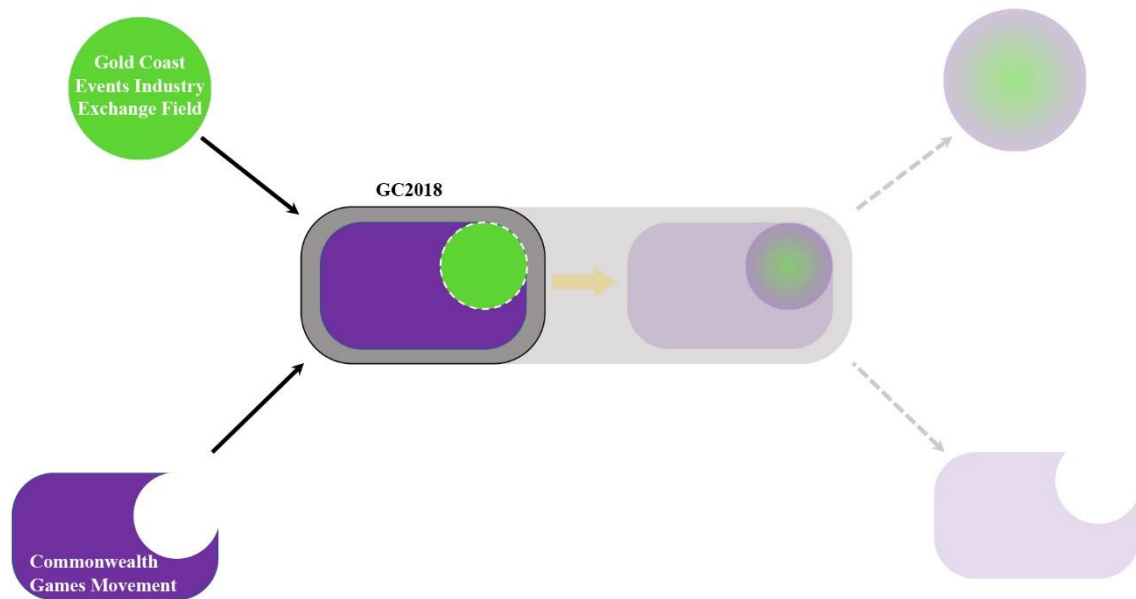


Figure 4.2 Emergence of the GC2018 interstitial issue field

The previous section detailed the significant power imbalance in favour of the CGF within the GC2018 field. However, mutual dependence was also necessary as the success of the Games was dependent upon collaboration between fields; most obviously, between the pre-existent Gold Coast events industry field and the CG Movement. Institutional change of less dominant organisations is likely to occur when the levels of mutual dependence and power imbalance between two fields are both high (Furnari, 2016). The drive for entry into the GC2018 field created pressures for members of the Gold Coast events industry field to conform to the norms and standards perceived as legitimate by GOLDOC and the CGF. Deephouse (1999) suggested that industry members are likely to adopt innovations through diffusion in order to appear legitimate and pursue competitive advantage. For example, the GCCC’s document, GC2018 Benefits (2016), identifies 15 local businesses that achieved ISO 9001 certification in 2015 through a GCCC-led programme in hopes of securing local supplier contracts for GC2018. As the next chapter argues, ISO 20121 has become an element of the Commonwealth Game Movement’s institutional infrastructure; thereby, presenting a pathway for the diffusion of the standard into the Gold Coast event industry organisational field. However, Respondent14, an event sustainability consultant, was sceptical as to whether actors would voluntarily adopt ISO 20121. She alluded to the fact

that diffusion of ISO 20121 within the GC2018 field was unlikely without external pressure, essentially what DiMaggio and Powell (1983) refer to as coercive isomorphism:

I'm still undecided on whether or not the events industry will buy-in to the standard. It entirely depends on GOLDOC putting it in their tender process. No one is going to do it voluntarily unless they think that it might help them in winning a pitch ... Unless GOLDOC says we require our waste company to have ISO 20121, or we require our venues to have it, how on Earth are they going to influence them?  
(Respondent14)

Respondent9 also alluded to the need for coercive pressure for the diffusion of the standard, stating that, "GOLDOC should actually be putting top-down pressure to those people that win the contracts and say, 'you need to do an advice session on it [ISO 20121] and we will facilitate that for you.'" Coercive isomorphism placed on dependent organisations through formal agreements, "...force one unit in a population to resemble other units that face the same set of environmental conditions" (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983, p. 149).

Despite the views of some actors that adoption of ISO 20121 should be mandated by GOLDOC, and although ISO 20121 was established within GOLDOC's institutional infrastructure, it was not a GOLDOC mandate that suppliers had to adopt the standard. When a boundary organisation mandates institutional change within a field, such as GOLDOC in this case, "...the diffusion of change is likely to be swift" (Zietsma et al., 2017). If ISO 20121 adoption had been mandated, enforcement would have been communicated to suppliers through the Sustainable Sourcing Code as it set out the minimum requirements for suppliers. The document described the strategy for implementing sustainability into the GC2018 procurement process. The overall purpose of the document was:

To responsibly manage our supply chain and enhance our sustainability performance through sustainable sourcing practices ... (the code) provides a framework for GOLDOC and Suppliers to deliver a sustainable GC2018 ... The Code constitutes minimum standards so that GOLDOC can manage its supply chain responsibly ... GOLDOC will then monitor Supplier practices to ensure compliance. GOLDOC may use a range of tools to achieve this, including software reporting tools, management plans and independent audits (GOLDOC, 2016, p. 8-10).

Thus, the document served to ensure GOLDOC's compliance with the standard, rather than forcing compliance on suppliers. Respondent8, a member of GOLDOC stated, "our main

job is to deliver the standard for the event ... We can't force the supply chain on that. They need some assurance that they can afford to have a management system in place.”

The researcher discussed the presence of ISO 20121 at the London 2012 Olympic Games and the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games with respondents who were informed on the decision-making process of those events. Both organising committees adopted the standard and displayed evidence of diffusion among venues. Respondent14, a sustainability consultant, discussed coercive pressure placed on venues by LOCOG to adopt the standard at the London 2012 Olympic Games: “London most definitely put those requirements on certain aspects of the supply chain ... I do know that they for sure required that.” Walker (2012) shared a similar opinion:

LOCOG requires all vendors partnering with the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games to be working towards BS 8901, which will (assuming it is published in time) be replaced by ISO 20121. In both cases, there is a strong business argument to be made for adopting one or both of these standards (p.46; parentheses in original).

Despite the use of coercive isomorphic pressures in both London and Glasgow, such measures were not instituted in the case of GC2018. Respondent3 justified GOLDOC's position of not forcing venues or suppliers to adopt the standard by stating:

I think what happens generally when people say you *must* adopt, is that nobody is inspired ... And they start doing it more like a robot than from an inspired way. I think it's important for people to approach the standard and be inspired and explore new things that they can create. I think that people are nervous about dictating what must be done. But I know that around the world, event professionals should be looking at implementing the standard because it will win them more business because its best practice and you should always be looking at what you can do to be best practice rather than waiting until you're told to do something.

By referring to people not being “inspired,” Respondent3's sentiment alludes to the potential for concealing non-conformity to the standard with surface adoption (Castka, 2015). Lawrence (2001) argued that while force may lead to fast institutionalisation, it is likely to be accompanied by low levels of stability and threats to legitimacy. GOLDOC's decision to not apply coercive pressure meant that, in order for the standard to diffuse, actors

would need to engage in *diffusion work* to impact the adoption of ISO 20121. Diffusion work is discussed in the next sub-section.

As the publication of ISO management standards has increased and moved towards sector-specific processes, research will likely shift towards examining the “early days of diffusion” (Castka, 2015, p.162). Indeed, the sport and event industries have entered these “early days” as the number of event industry-specific standards such as ISO 20121 have grown in recent years. As these standards are voluntary in nature, identifying the key actors involved in their diffusion is a critical step in understanding why some standards succeed and others fail (Castka, 2015). Sport and event scholars have pointed to bid organisations as actors to move towards new event sustainability standards (Pentifallo & VanWynsberghe, 2015; Samuel & Stubbs, 2012), while others have suggested the need for more government regulation (Preuss, 2013; Getz, 2009). Thus, the next section identifies the key diffusion actors of ISO 20121 – those actors who engaged in diffusion activities in the GC2018 organisational field.

#### **4.4 ISO 20121 and Diffusion Actors**

Standard adoption has often been viewed as a direct consequence of its creation (Abbott & Snidal, 2009). The perception of an “invisible hand” in the diffusion process largely stems from the majority of research on management standards being carried out well after focal standards have been institutionalised, when isomorphic pressures for adoption are prevalent (Castka, 2015; Stamm, 2019). For instance, little is known about the early stages of the most-well researched ISO management standard, ISO 9001:

Because of the lack of data from the early stage of its adoption ... research on the ISO 9000 standard focuses mainly on the later stages of diffusion, by which time a large number of companies in a large number of countries had adopted the standard (Delmas & Montes-Sancho, 2011, p. 4).

Consequently, the actors responsible for the diffusion of voluntary standards have received little attention from researchers. In this view, diffusion work refers to, “...designated activities which promote and disseminate an organizational standard at the field level and support its adoption within organizations” (Stamm, 2019, p.116). Within this study, diffusion actors were those actors that conducted diffusion activities within the GC2018 field. As ISO 20121 was published six months following the creation of GOLDOC,



diffusion actors were either external to the spatial field (the Gold Coast) or occupied temporary positions within the field during GC2018, such as members of GOLDOC. This section details the main diffusion actors of ISO 20121, as illustrated in Figure 4.3.

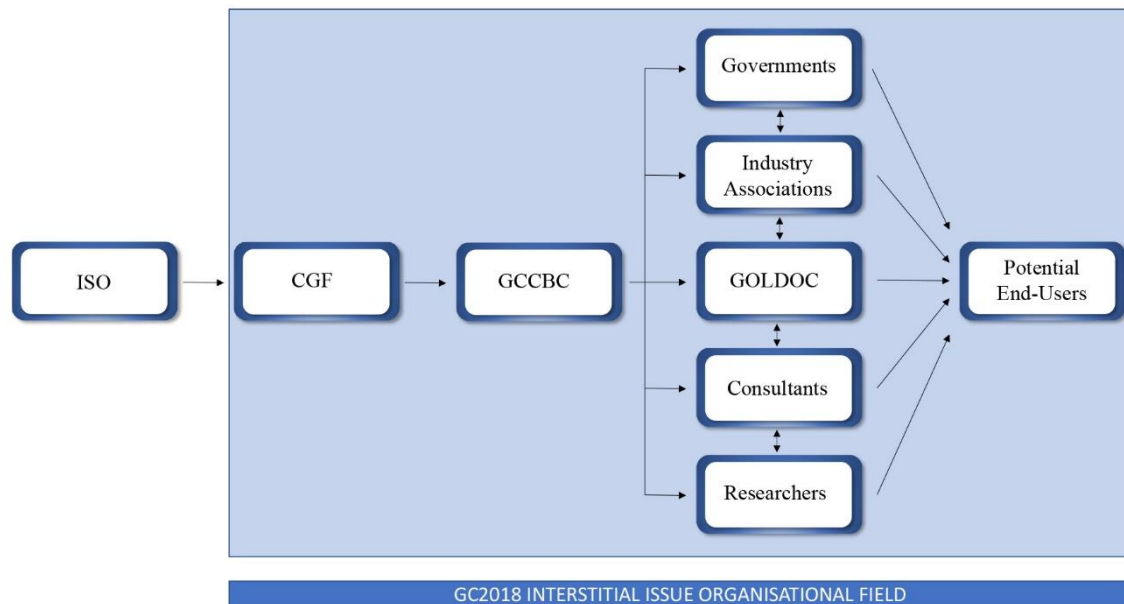


Figure 4.3 Diffusion actor groups of ISO 20121

#### 4.4.1 The International Organization for Standardization (ISO)

Although ISO is the world's largest developer of international standards, the organisation itself is relatively small, with less than 200 employees (Helms, Oliver, & Webb, 2012; Wood, 2012). ISO does not decide when to develop standards, but rather responds to requests for their development from external stakeholders and gaps in the market (Wood, 2012). As previously discussed in Section 2.3.3, the creation of BS8901 for the London 2012 Olympic Games received international support from other national standard bodies that led to the development of ISO 20121. The publication of the standard coincided with those Games.

Thus, ISO's role in the strategic diffusion of ISO 20121 was less prominent than its role as a developer. The standard is not a unique case within ISO, as the organisation purposefully positions itself solely as a standard creator:

Our role here at ISO is to oversee the development of standards with a committee of experts. The practical application is carried out by regulators, industry experts, designers, and consultants. Our standards, like ISO 20121, are developed by technical committees from government, academia, industry, and so on, through a process of consensus and transparency. Although we facilitate this process, we do not enforce, regulate, or certify compliance with any standards we publish (email correspondence with ISO project manager, 2017).

Given the organisation's stance on the dissemination of its own products, it was not surprising that ISO had no direct influence on the diffusion process of the standard within the context of GC2018. The diffusion and maintenance work of ISO is mainly done through external organisational actors that govern their standards.

As the standard creator, ISO remains external to the fields within which its standards are adopted. ISO 26000 (Guidance on Social Responsibility) was released in 2010, after a nine-year process of research and development (Helms et al., 2012). This process was followed by an unprecedented and concerted effort to diffuse ISO 26000, specifically in developing countries, which continued until November 2012 (Stamm, 2019). These activities acted as a further hindrance to any potential diffusion aimed at ISO 20121.

ISO's network contains over 160 national standard bodies. The national standards body that represents Australia is Standards Australia (SA). SA's main roles are to develop and adopt internationally aligned standards in Australia and participate in the development of a wide range of International Standards. When a standard is developed by ISO, SA considers whether to adopt the international version of the standard or to develop a national standard. SA's involvement with ISO 20121 was limited to an observer role until 2010 when it upgraded to a participant (Walker, 2012). This active role led to the establishment of the Australian Mirror Committee that attended the final three international meetings and provided feedback on the initial draft on the standard. The committee consisted of:

- Association of Australian Convention Bureaux
- Australian Centre for Event Management (UTS)
- Australian Banking Association
- Business Events Council of Australia
- Business Events Sydney
- Exhibition & Event Association of Australia
- Environment Institute of Australia and New Zealand

- International Congress and Convention Association
- International Special Events Society
- Live Performance Australia
- Local Government & Shires Association (NSW)
- Meetings & Events Australia
- NSW Department of Environmental Climate Change and Water
- Sustainable Event Alliance (Radulovic, 2011)

Although national standards bodies have an important role in the diffusion of standards at the national level as relationships between key actors are strongest at the national level (Stamm, 2019), SA did not partake in diffusion activities of the standard within the GC2018 field.

#### ***4.4.2 The Commonwealth Games Federation (CGF)***

The CGF owns the rights to the CWG and Commonwealth Youth Games. It is responsible for the general direction, policy, and control of each event. While elite actors have a significant influence on institutional change, they are also the most likely to face threats to their legitimacy from other actor groups (Zietsma et al., 2017). Following the 2010 Delhi Commonwealth Games, uncertainty over the future of the Commonwealth Games was clear as an anonymous Commonwealth Games Association President stated in an interview with BBC, “...unless there are significant changes in the governance and management of the CGF, the future of the Games themselves may be in doubt” (McLaughlin, 2014, ¶10).

In an effort to ensure its legitimacy and the future of the event, the CGF underwent a dramatic change in both leadership and strategic direction immediately following the 2014 Glasgow Commonwealth Games (McLaughlin, 2014). David Grevenberg was appointed the new Chief Executive of the CGF (CGF, 2014). The American, ironically, was chosen over three British candidates due to his previous influential work as Chief Executive of the Glasgow 2014 Games, and Executive Director of Sport and International Federation Relations at the International Paralympic Committee. The following year at the CGF General Assembly in Auckland, Scotland’s Dame Louise Martin DBE was elected as the first female President of the CGF (CGF, 2015a). The former Vice-Chairperson of the Glasgow 2014 Games pledged to deliver on the development of commercial partnerships to achieve her vision for the future of the Commonwealth Games. Coincidentally, that General Assembly also saw the unanimous approval of the CGF’s new strategic reform agenda

entitled “Transformation 2022,” which described the organisation’s new vision: “In building peaceful, sustainable and prosperous communities globally by inspiring Commonwealth Athletes to drive the impact and ambition of all Commonwealth Citizens through Sport” (CGF, 2015b, p. 17).

The sudden reconfiguration of the CGF’s leadership and strategic direction reflected the legitimate internal and external threats the CGF was facing leading up to GC2018. In their study on the professionalisation of English rugby union, O’Brien and Slack (2004) stated that, “evidence of mimetic isomorphism involved behaviour where field-level constituents imitated particular organizational practices of their peers” (p.23). Similarly, the strategic responses of the CGF were straight mimesis of the institutional infrastructure of the IOC’s governance of the Olympic Games. Transformation 2022, or what Mackay (2015, ¶14) called, “the Commonwealth Games version of Agenda 2020,” was released the year following the IOC’s strategic reform agenda (Keech, 2018). The bid process for the Commonwealth Games essentially mirrors that of the Olympic Games (Emery, 2015). The CGF’s 2018 Candidate City Manual (2011b), which details the bidding procedures for Candidate Cities of the Commonwealth Games, even “acknowledges the assistance and support provided by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) in allowing the CGF to base this manual on the contents of the IOC’s Candidate City Manual” (CGF, 2011b, p.153). Furthermore, Event Knowledge Services (EKS), a Swiss-based organisation that emerged out of the 2000 Sydney Olympic Games, was not only retained by the CGF to manage the Commonwealth Games Knowledge Management Program for the 2014 Glasgow Commonwealth Games (Schenk, Parent, MacDonald, & Proulx Therrien, 2015), but also provided technical reviews for Candidate Cities. Clearly, the retention of key personnel and actors central to Glasgow 2014 represents the construction of normative networks aimed at reducing uncertainty and enhancing perceptions of legitimacy. As Lawrence and Suddaby (2006) stated, the construction of normative networks enhances the normative sanctioning of practices and forms, “the relevant peer group with respect to compliance monitoring and evaluation” (p. 221).

The CGF’s publishing of *Transformation 2022* focused on the key actions required by the CGF’s Executive Board, Management Team, Commonwealth Games Associations, and other relevant stakeholders, “...that aim to transform the Movement’s predominate focus on hosting the Commonwealth Games to a wider vision to be realised by 2022 that is based on partnership, engagement, and value generation” (CGF, 2015b, p. 13). To deliver

on this strategic plan, the CGF requires organising committees to implement a sustainability programme that meets international standards of “best practice”. However, unlike the IOC, the CGF does not explicitly require ISO 20121 to be adopted by organising committees. These strategic actions illustrate how elite actors respond to pressures to introduce “innovations” that not only remedy threats to their central position within the field, but also reinforce it (Zeitsma et al., 2017).

#### ***4.4.3 Gold Coast (2018) Commonwealth Games Bid Company (GCCBC)***

The Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games Bid Ltd was established in 2010 and was responsible for securing the rights to host the 2018 CWG on behalf of the Gold Coast. This bid committee was comprised of the Chair and Chief Executive Officer of the Australian Commonwealth Games Association (ACGA), local senior business members, and Olympic and Commonwealth Games athletes (CGF, 2011a). The GCCBC’s bid marked the first occasion of ISO 20121 within the field as the Gold Coast’s Candidate City File included a commitment to implement ISO 20121 a year prior to the standard’s release:

The OC will continue to monitor initiatives in the development of event-related Environmentally Sustainable Development (ESD) benchmarks and compliance standards, and where appropriate, will refine strategies as and when these benchmarks and standards are released. This may include initiatives under development such as the International Organisation for Standardisation’s (ISO) Events Sustainable Management System. (2011, p. 41)

The City of Gold Coast was awarded the rights to host the 2018 Commonwealth Games on 11 November 2011, beating out Hambantota with a 43 to 27 vote. Following the announcement, the Queensland Government, Australian Commonwealth Games Association, the Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games Corporation (GOLDOC), the City of Gold Coast, and the CGF signed into the Host City Contract that details the contractual obligations of all parties in organising and delivering the Games (Queensland Government, 2019b).

#### ***4.4.3 The Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games Corporation (GOLDOC)***

The organising committee of GC2018, GOLDOC, was formally established under the Queensland Government’s Commonwealth Games Arrangements Act on 1 January 2012. GOLDOC was responsible for the planning, organising, and delivery of GC2018 in

collaboration with the following key delivery partners: Queensland State Government, the Australian Government, the CGF, the GCCC, and the Commonwealth Games Association. GOLDOC acted as a field coordinator as its primary role was structuring the field that delivered GC2018. GOLDOC was comprised of six full-time employees when the organisation was established in 2012. By Games-time, the workforce reached over 1,500 employees across 41 Functional Areas (FA), which were responsible for the performance of specific functions in relation to the delivery of GC2018 such as accommodation, sponsorship, and security. These FAs were governed through five broad divisions. Sustainability and Legacy was an FA within the Planning and Readiness division. The primary role of this FA was to:

... drive and support the delivery of a sustainable GC2018 by implementing the international standard ISO20121, to ensure that legacy opportunities are being identified across the organization, to report on our sustainability performance and to support each FA to ensure that sustainability and legacy considerations are embedded within planning and delivery (GOLDOC, 2015, p. 15).

Since both sustainability and legacy are critical components of a candidate city's bid for the Commonwealth Games, the Gold Coast's bid incorporated a balanced approach to economic activity, social progress and environmental sustainability that would lead to a lasting positive legacy for the Gold Coast. To deliver on this commitment, the implementation of ISO 20121 was established in the Gold Coast's Candidate City File when the standard was still under development. GOLDOC followed through with the commitment outlined in the bid for the Games in 2014 when it began the process of adopting the standard.

#### ***4.4.4 Governments***

Previous research on ISO 9001, 14001, and 26000 emphasised the critical role of governments in the diffusion of these ISO standards (Castka & Balzarova, 2008b; Castka & Corbett, 2015; Delmas & Montes-Sancho, 2011). Delmas and Montes-Sancho (2011) examined the pre-institutionalisation period of ISO 14001 and found that commitment from government to drive adoption of ISO 14001 was essential during this period and became less important as the standard institutionalised. Previous research on government's role within the diffusion of ISO standards predominately focused on national governments.

However, as this section illustrates, the role of local and state governments was of greater importance in the diffusion of ISO 20121.

#### *The Australian Government*

The role of the Australian (Federal) Government in the diffusion of ISO 20121 within the context of GC2018 was limited in comparison to previous research on the role of national governments in the diffusion of ISO standards. Its inability to influence the diffusion of ISO 20121 was due to its minor involvement in the delivery of GC2018, as well as ISO 20121 being an industry-specific standard.

The lack of involvement with GC2018 from the Federal Government was first communicated in 2009 when the city was contemplating a bid on staging the event. The then-Gold Coast Mayor, Ron Clarke, stated “we’re currently waiting because the Federal Government have also mentioned that they won’t be making any contribution towards it. They’re concentrating on the 2018 World Cup bid” (ABC, 2009, ¶5). Australia withdrew its bid for the 2018 FIFA World Cup, officially bidding for the 2022 event. Leading up to GC2018, the Federal Government became involved with the event as Respondent 29 stated, “I think it’s fair to say that the Games partners include the Federal Government doing it as well. They came to the table a bit late because of the International Cricket Council [ICC] Cricket World Cup, and other events.” The Federal Government was a major partner in the delivery of the 2015 ICC Cricket World Cup as well as the 2018 Sydney Invictus Games. While the Federal Government eventually became a GC2018 partner, its role was primarily in coordinating security strategies for the event in collaboration with the Queensland Government and the City of Gold Coast.

#### *Queensland State Government*

The Queensland State Government was the central actor in the delivery of GC2018. The State Government officially operated as a Games Partner through two departments: the Department of State Development, Infrastructure and Planning (DSDIP); and, the Department of Innovation, Tourism Industry Development, and the Commonwealth Games (DITID). The DSDIP was responsible for the delivery of the infrastructure program, which required the supervision and construction of the Games’ competition and non-competition venues, as well as the Games village. The DSDIP, formerly known as the Department of Tourism, Major Event, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games (DTESB) until 2017, established the Office of the Commonwealth Games (OCG) that led the State Government’s delivery of the Games. The OCG was responsible for managing the Games’ budget, which

included an AUD\$ 1.34 billion investment from the State Government (Queensland Government, 2019b). The OCG was also responsible for coordinating the entire State Government's service delivery for GC2018; leading Queensland's state-wide legacy program, Embracing 2018; as well as developing the state-wide arts and cultural program. Although GOLDOC did not represent the state, the Queensland Government passed the Commonwealth Games Arrangements Act 2011 that led to the establishment of GOLDOC.

#### *Gold Coast City Council (GCCC)*

In 2012, the GCCC established the Commonwealth Games Unit (CGU) that was "...responsible for delivering city operations, city legacy and arts and cultural program initiatives and was the asset owner of many of the venues" (GOLDOC, 2015, p. 16). While sustainability was not directly an area of concern for the CGU, the team responsible for delivery of the city's legacy program worked closely with GOLDOC's sustainability team. According to Respondent20:

Because legacy and sustainability kind of go hand in hand, we work closely with the sustainability team. You would have seen GOLDOC's sustainability priorities. Every one of those areas has a touch point back to the city, so we are involved and we're working closely with them to actually deliver on those components of the ISO. For example, the sustainability team is working closely with our waste team to look at sustainable initiatives and we're working with them on how that can be embedded during Games time. Where the legacy for the city comes into it is that we can look at changing those practices not just during Games time, but on an ongoing basis. So, although we don't actually work directly with the standard, I guess you could say indirectly we do a lot of the ground work with the sustainability team.

#### **4.4.5 Consultants**

Consultants play an important role in the institutionalisation of voluntary standards (Brès & Gond, 2014), especially in the early phase of diffusion when the perceived legitimacy of standards has not yet matured. Within this study, consultants acted as embedded actors as they took on the roles of auditors and industry associations engaged in diffusion work within the context of GC2018. Brès and Gond (2014) described sustainability consultants as interpreters who, through the construction of a market, connect sustainability issues to organisations seeking to adopt sustainability-related practices. Thus, their most



prominent role in the diffusion of standards is to assist organisations with standard implementation.

Within the case of GC2018, GOLDOC employed Sustainable Events Ltd to assist in the implementation of ISO 20121; a somewhat controversial partnership. A dispute stemmed from Sustainable Events Ltd being a UK-based organisation that was chosen over an Australian-based organisation. Respondent14 discussed how this appointment was perceived as hypocritical to the principles of sustainable event management:

That's an example maybe of them not quite practicing what they preach in that these sorts of events absolutely need to standby that fact [sourcing locally] if they have the competence in local suppliers...there are maybe five companies in the world that specialise in this [ISO 20121 consulting], and certainly, only one in Australia.

The issue of local supplier preference was also addressed within the ISO 20121 document itself by “minimizing the negative impacts of the supply chain itself, in particular, the social aspects (e.g. by giving preference to local suppliers...)” (ISO, 2012, p. 36). Choosing an international firm over a domestic one has obvious environmental, economic, and social implications.

The most prominent environmental implication that resulted from choosing an international sustainability consultancy firm is the long-haul air transportation associated with travelling from the UK to the Gold Coast. The area in which event managers can make a substantial contribution to carbon footprint reductions is a strategic plan that is aimed at reducing long-haul air travel (Dolf & Teehan, 2015). However, this environmental implication is the least prominent when drawing a comparison to all three pillars of sustainability, as the consultants from Sustainable Events LTD only travelled to Australia a few times a year to consult with GOLDOC.

The main economic implication of hiring an international firm was “economic leakage” (Holmes et al., 2015, p. 65). Economic leakage occurs when funds accrued from various sources (such as government grants, investment, sponsorship, etc.) are spent outside the host destination's economy, resulting in a loss of money in the host community.

The social consequence that resulted from hiring an international sustainable consultancy firm was the most significant barrier for the diffusion of ISO 20121 within the host region. This consequence was manifested in a missed opportunity for the development of local human capital. Human capital refers to the, “...workforce characteristics deemed

essential to sustainable integrated social and economic development ... its main focus is on the knowledge, skills, attitudes, competence, and characteristics of individuals and groups, especially for their capacities for productive citizenship and work-related activities” (Lawson, 2005, p. 139). Few events compare to the scale of GC2018, with the GC2018 the largest sporting event held in Australia this decade. Thus, the opportunity for a domestic sustainability consultancy firm to assist in the implementation of ISO 20121 for an OC like GOLDOC is rare. This opportunity, if successful, could have increased the knowledge and legitimacy of the domestic firm. The increased legitimacy could have had the potential to increase future adoption rates of ISO 20121 within Australia, as a domestic consultancy firm would have demonstrated experience in assisting GOLDOC with the successful adoption of the standard.

#### ***4.4.6 Industry and Professional Associations/Auditors***

Industry and Professional associations have been previously criticised for their lack of involvement in promoting sustainability events. In reference to compliance standards, Dickson and Arcodia (2010) stated:

There is no evidence to suggest any efforts have been made in developing compliance standards for the industry. Few associations recommend accreditation programs, and none appear to offer their own accreditation program. It could be argued that because no government or other legal requirements exist, there is no need for practitioners or associations to monitor practices (p. 242).

The findings from this study indicate that some improvement has been made in this area since Dickson and Arcodia’s (2010) conclusion. However, these efforts have been varied as the findings indicated that only one event industry association engaged in diffusion work within the GC2018 field: Sustainable Event Alliance (SEA). Sustainable Event Alliance is a “global affiliation of organisations, events and individuals who are focusing on improving the sustainability outcomes of events” (Sustainable Event Alliance, 2019). The association was a centrally embedded actor engaged in various ISO 20121 diffusion activities. However, GOLDOC employed Sustainable Event Alliance to conduct a second party conformity assessment to ISO 20121 as assessments may be completed by external verifiers and not formal governance auditors:

GOLDOC requested an external conformity assessment to their implementation of ISO 20121, and rather than go directly to third party which is quite a laborious and

expensive process sometimes with auditors who are not familiar with the sector, they decided to go to a second party verifier. This is done by a related entity, so in this case, in an industry association. (Respondent14)

Within Lawrence and Suddaby's (2006) typology of institutional work, auditors are critical for what they called "policing," which is a form of maintenance work that involves, "ensuring compliance through enforcement, auditing and monitoring" (p. 230). Stamm (2019) did not identify auditors as an influential group in the early diffusion of ISO 26000 due to the standard being uncertifiable; an outcome that was considered a partial victory for actor groups that were against CSR standardisation. However, ISO 20121 is a certifiable standard, as organisations have the ability to contract certification bodies to apply for third party certification, which is assessed by an auditor. Auditors award ISO 20121 certificates to organisations that are deemed compliant with the standard.

#### ***4.4.7 Universities and Researchers***

Universities and researchers represent both individual and organisational actors that were influential in the early diffusion of ISO 20121. Evidence of this actor officially entering the GC2018 field traced back to 2013 when the GCCC "... commissioned a researcher on the Gold Coast to do some research for us about legacy from other major sport event" (Respondent31). Subsequently, this research involved the collaboration of three academics representing two local universities – Griffith University and Bond University. However, collaboration on research was short-lived as Griffith University was announced as an official partner of the Commonwealth Games in October 2015. The extent to which universities could take on the role of diffusion actors within the field was thus severely limited due to the exclusivity of the partnership. Thus, universities and researchers outside of Griffith were rendered to peripheral actors. While peripheral actors were less bound by CGF governance, their ability to spark institutional change within the field was limited. Kelly, Fairley, and O'Brien (2019) warned about the effect of formalisation of partnerships on host destinations within the context of the Caribbean nations and the 2007 International Cricket Council World Cup, stating:

... the formalised directives effectively locked out many local businesses and reduced the locals' ability to express and celebrate their culture through the event, thus restricting the host destinations' ability to leverage the event" (p.129).

Within the current study, the effect of the official partnership on the ability of actors to do diffusion work is detailed in the following chapter.

Nonetheless, the official partnership created substantial opportunities for Griffith University as it included:

- Internships – 250 Griffith internships with GOLDOC and its partners;
- Facilities – Campus facilities used in the lead-up and during the Games;
- Scholarships – Students from all Commonwealth nations, including Australia, eligible for the new Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games Scholarships at Griffith University;
- Creative Arts Partner – Griffith contributed to the creative arts program, including the Opening and Closing Ceremonies;
- Team Australia – Official University Partner of 2018 Australian Commonwealth Games Team;
- Queen’s Baton Relay – Griffith campuses included in the Queen’s Baton Relay Celebrations (Rodgers, 2015).

In relation to ISO 20121, the internships were created for students to work with GOLDOC’s Sustainability Team in various components in the adoption of the standard:

The Sustainability FA was fortunate to work with eight interns in the P7 intake. They more than doubled the size of a small team, assisting with venue planning, developing transfer of knowledge documentation as well as providing critical resources during GC2018 on venue for compliance monitoring (GOLDOC, 2018, p. 26).

This invaluable experience for Griffith students aided in the normative process associated with the institutionalisation of ISO 20121 as it allowed those students to experience application of the standard themselves, in a real-world setting, and not just through the retrospective accounts of guest speakers and case studies in the classroom, which was the case for non-partner institutions. Thus, the partnership led to, “...changes that bring positive outcomes for some stakeholders and negative outcomes for others” (Preuss, 2015, p.5).

Outside of the academic setting, there was evidence of industry researchers doing diffusion work within the GC2018 field, which involved the Gold Coast Convention and

Exhibition Centre (GCCEC), a GC2018 venue that hosted basketball and netball events, and was also the media centre for the Games. The GCCEC had an established partnership with the EarthCheck Research Institute, an international advisory group for the tourism industry that evolved out of the Australian Sustainable Tourism Cooperative Research Centre (EarthCheck, 2019). EarthCheck became formally aligned with the GCCEC in 2008 to help establish the venue as a world-leading sustainable meetings and events centre. The diffusion work carried out by EarthCheck is discussed in the next chapter.

The role of researchers as individual actors within the diffusion process was not as apparent. Stamm (2019) discussed the importance of, "...doing research and presenting the results at conferences or via publications" (p. 21) in the early diffusion of ISO 26000. This area of conference presentations and publications is where ISO 20121 is much further behind other comparable ISO standards. The widespread adoption and variety of disciplines have made ISO 9000 and ISO 14000 "...fertile ground for researchers" (Castka & Corbett, 2015, p. 167). As an industry-specific standard, it is not surprising that ISO 20121 has not received the research interest across the various disciplines of the other ISO standards. However, the current lack of academic interest in areas, such as sport and event management, where ISO 20121 would be expected to generate buzz, is of concern.

#### **4.5 Chapter Summary**

After establishing the nature of the GC2018 field, this chapter identified key diffusion actors of ISO 20121. Three key findings were evident in the analysis of the data. First, as an FCE, the Commonwealth Games yield similar field-configuration outcomes on host cities as the Olympic Games, such as the requirements of governments to pass legislation to uphold their values and standards; albeit on a smaller scale. Second, the dynamic nature of GC2018 led to new actors entering the field throughout various phases of the event. These diffusion actors such as GOLDOC, the CGF, and the GCCBC occupied different positions within the GC2018 field. Having established the key actors involved in the diffusion of ISO 20121 in the organisational field of GC2018, the next chapter examines the nature of the actual diffusion work carried out by these actors that aimed to disseminate information and increase adoption rates of ISO 20121 within the field. Figure 4.4 provides a summary of the timeline of key actors entering the GC2018 field.

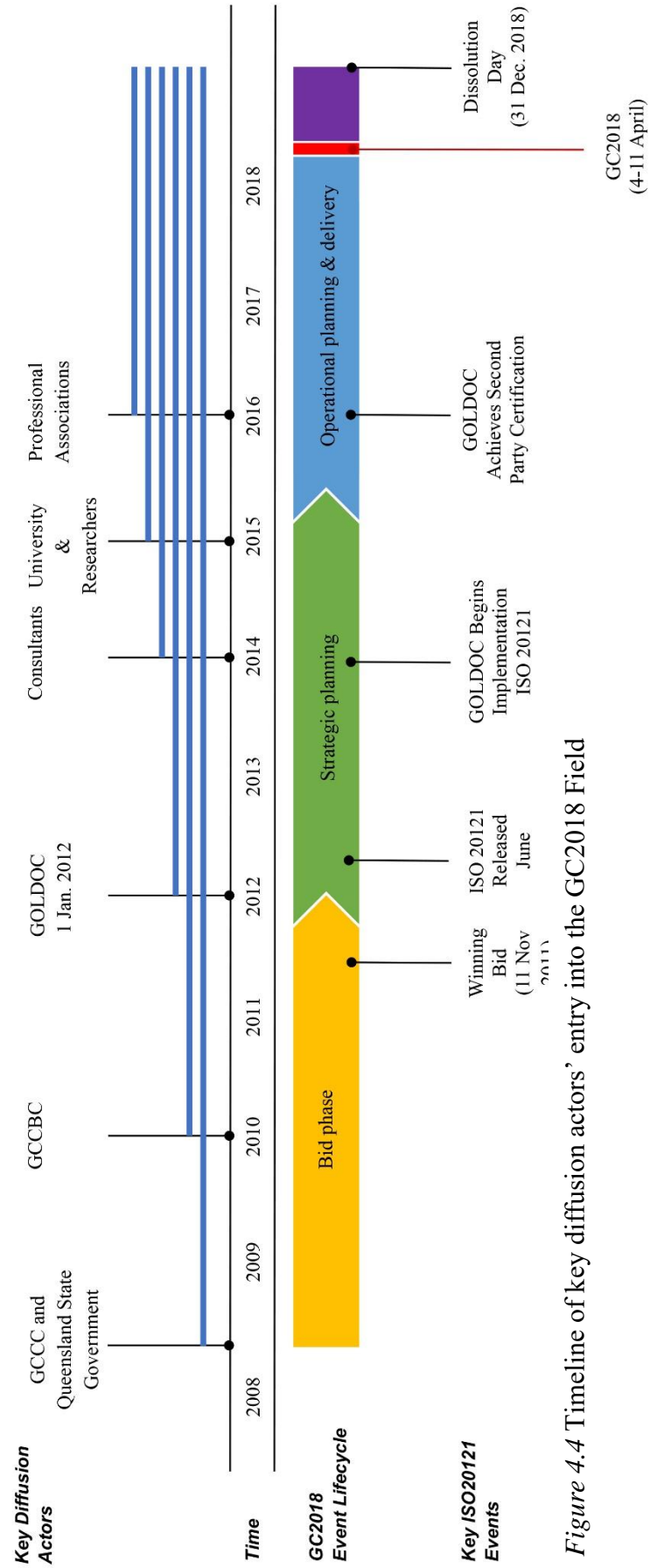


Figure 4.4 Timeline of key diffusion actors' entry into the GC2018 Field



## Chapter Five: Examining the Diffusion Work of Key Actors

### 5.1 Introduction

Chapter Four identified the key actors involved in the diffusion of ISO 20121 in the context of GC2018. This chapter now addresses the study's second research question; "*how do key actors diffuse a management system standard within an organisational field?*" The aim of this research question is to provide an understanding of how key actors within the GC2018 field engaged in diffusion work of ISO 20121; thereby, "opening up the black box of diffusion" (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006, p. 247). This chapter focuses on diffusion work as the second stage in the institutionalisation process of ISO 20121 within this study.

The first section of this chapter describes how Stamm's (2019) concept of diffusion work was used to analyse the diffusion of ISO 20121 within the GC2018 field and is illustrated in Figure 5.1. As a subset of institutional work, diffusion work was an appropriate theoretical perspective to analyse the diffusion of ISO 20121 as diffusion work focuses on the dissemination of standards. The sections that follow detail the diffusion work of the key actors identified in Chapter Four, beginning with the CGF. As diffusion work commences following the creation of a standard (Stamm, 2019), ISO was not included in this chapter as the organisation identified itself as exclusively a standard creator (Stamm, 2019).

The findings from this chapter reveal how particular GC2018 actors strategically engaged in diffusion work through GC2018 in an effort to disseminate information pertaining to ISO 20121, while other actors remained more passive in their effort. Furthermore, the findings build on the work of Lawrence, Suddaby, and Leca (2011) two important concepts within institutional work—intentionality and effort. This chapter also builds on Stamm's (2019) conceptualisation of diffusion work as a subset of institutional work. Following the analysis of the diffusion work employed by key actors, the chapter concludes with a summary of the findings and its relation to Chapter Six.



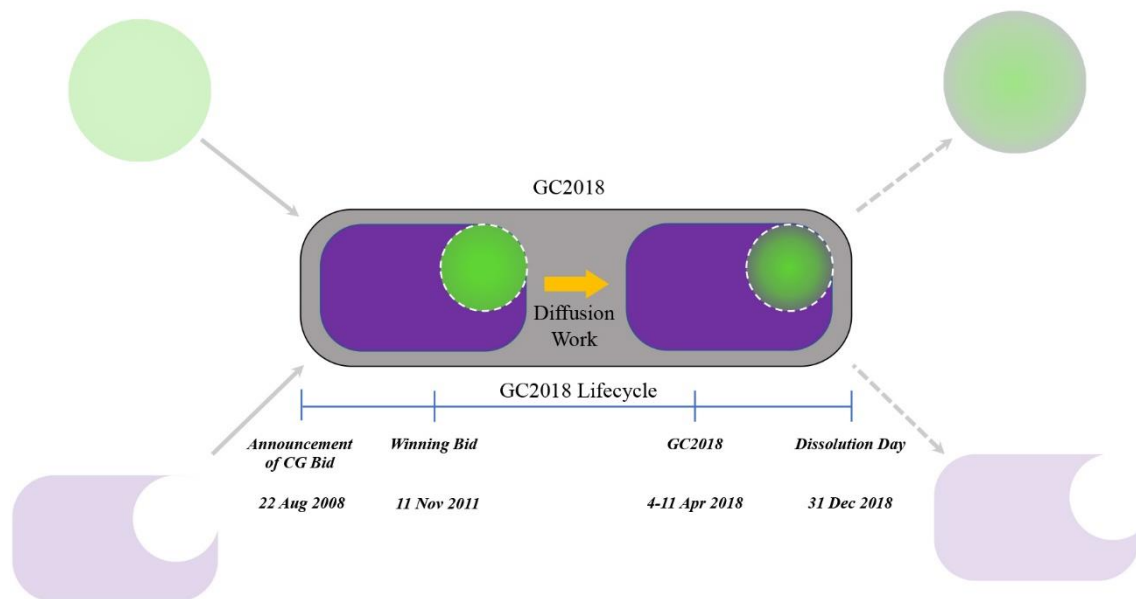


Figure 5.1 ISO 20121 diffusion work within the GC2018 Field

## 5.2 Indicators of Diffusion Work for ISO 20121

Stamm's (2019) typology of diffusion work depicts four modes – concrete, broad, selective and conceptual; this typology was used to identify and analyse actors' activities that aimed to disseminate organisational adoption of ISO 20121 within the GC2018 field. The modes depicted in Stamm's typology were identified by examining whether the focal diffusion activity was aimed at direct/indirect use of the standard, and by whether the standard was explicit/implicit to the diffusion activity. *Direct* diffusion consists of activities that could lead expressly to the adoption of the standard such as an event sustainability consulting service; while *indirect* diffusion consists of more general information dissemination activities aimed at a broader audience such as a sustainability seminar. *Explicit* diffusion refers to activities in which the standard plays a central role such as a sustainability case study; while *implicit* diffusion consists of activities in which only parts of the standard such as definitions, principles, or recommendations are incorporated into an organisation's sustainability policy. Following Stamm's research that was focused specifically on the diffusion of ISO 26000, the current study defines the four modes of diffusion in the following manner:

1. *Concrete*: actors work to get ISO 20121 adopted by an organisation in the GC2018 interstitial issue field;

2. *Broad*: the dissemination of information about ISO 20121 to a broad audience of potential adopters through various media such as forums, organisational documents, news media, etcetera;
3. *Selective*: actors select elements of ISO 20121 and integrate them into an organisation in the GC2018 interstitial issue field; and,
4. *Conceptual*: actors integrate specific concepts, definitions, or recommendations within ISO 20121 into their own sustainability policies and processes and disseminate these actions to a broad audience of potential standard adopters.

The following sections analyse the diffusion work of actors through these four modes of diffusion work.

### **5.3 Commonwealth Games Federation (CGF)**

Chapter Four detailed how the CGF strategically responded to threats to the institutional legitimacy of the Commonwealth Games by publishing the *Transformation 2022* document, and various other mechanisms that were identified as two forms of institutional work: mimicry, and the construction of normative networks. These strategies led to the CGF's integration of institutional infrastructure akin to the International Olympic Committee's (IOC) policies and procedures for the Olympic Games. Within this study, findings indicated that these strategic responses to maintain the institutional legitimacy of the Commonwealth Games resulted in an organisational transformation that aided the diffusion of ISO 20121. Specifically, the strategies adopted by the CGF that affected the diffusion of ISO 20121 were identified within the organisation's Commonwealth Games Knowledge Management Programme (CGKMP) Candidate City Manual (2011b) and governance plan, *Transformation 2022* (2015b). These parts of the CGF's institutional infrastructure contained elements of implicit forms of diffusion work (i.e. selective and conceptual), as ISO 20121 was not detailed or even referenced within either document.

#### ***5.3.1 Candidate City Manual***

The CGF's Candidate City Manual was identified as an example of selective (i.e. direct and implicit) diffusion. Specifically, the Manual detailed the bid and hosting requirements for Candidate Cities of the 2018 Commonwealth Games, thereby, constituting the direct axis of diffusion work. However, the Manual did not explicitly require bidding cities to commit to ISO 20121. Rather, an implicit reference to the adoption of compliance

standards was evident within the requirements of the Environment, Legacy/Sustainability and Meteorology Theme of the Manual, which states the following: “Provide details of the environmental management tools and/or compliance standards that will be used to achieve the environmental objectives and targets” (CGF, 2011b, p.45). The CGF’s requirement suggests an environmentally-focused sustainable event management system. ISO 20121 (2012) compels adopting organisations to, “... determine the boundaries and applicability of the event sustainability management system to establish its scope” (p.8), which includes, “the requirements of interested parties (i.e. their needs and expectations whether stated, implied or obligatory).” (p.7, parentheses in original).

As the event owner of the Commonwealth Games, the CGF meets the criteria of an interested party. While the standard was designed for users to address sustainability issues in a holistic way, the CGF’s inclusion of “compliance standards” within the Environment section of the Theme and not the Legacy/Sustainability section implies that organising committees should design their management system to concentrate on environmental sustainability issues related to the event. This finding supports Ross and Leopkey’s (2018) concluding remark within the context of the Olympic Games: “It seems that a bid cannot address sustainability or zero impact without first addressing basic environmental protection. Thus, environment can be considered the core theme, as its presence is what the other two themes build from in their demands” (p. 15).

### ***5.3.2 Commonwealth Games Knowledge Management Programme (CGKMP)***

The CGKMP was created to encourage the sharing of information among organising committees of the Commonwealth Games through a range of services described in Chapter Four. While selective diffusion of ISO 20121 was evident within the CGKMP, respondents described a number of issues with its effectiveness. For example, Respondent4 stated, “our interaction with Glasgow was really just around pre-Games and a bit more after they delivered the event.” Respondent11 alluded to the timing of activities within the CGKMP as a reason for the minimal interaction with Glasgow’s sustainability team:

I've been here for two and a half years; and same with [name removed]. And it was only about 30 people in the organisation when we joined. By the time the Glasgow Games came around, our contact with the team became sporadic. I remember we had one skype call and it got cancelled because there was a ticketing disaster .... But as an organisation, we were very small when Glasgow was ramping up.

Furthermore, the CGKMP offers a knowledge repository through its Event Knowledge Services department. Although this source included relevant information to Glasgow's experience with ISO 20121, Respondent4 stated that, "... it didn't really fit our sustainability issues as the Glasgow guys had to deal with very different problems." Respondent4's statement suggests that the differences between the two cities in their justification for hosting the Games resulted in varying sustainability issues. Respondent20 also described this difference:

While the Glasgow Games is a great example to look at, you can't compare the cities of Glasgow and the Gold Coast, we're at different ends of the spectrum. For us, we're a young city, we're on the brink of becoming what we'd like to see in the future as a global city. The biggest thing that we could get out of these Games is putting our city on the map, so that people internationally know who we are, where we are and that we exist. and then what we can offer and what might attract people to come here. Whereas cities like Glasgow, Manchester, London, Barcelona, and Toronto are already really well established and have got these deep histories of maturity and culture behind them. Their reasons for wanting to host the Commonwealth Games or the Olympic Games are very different than ours.

Thus, the cultural differences between Glasgow and the Gold Coast led to differences in prevailing sustainability issues, which resulted in digital information that was deemed irrelevant for the diffusion of the ISO 20121 standard.

However, one component of the CGKMP that was described as an effective diffusion mechanism of ISO 20121 was the Glasgow 2014 Debrief Programme: "Definitely Post-Games [Glasgow 2014] was an important learning experience for us. There's a really big debrief between previous organising committee to the new one" (Respondent11). The CGF Debrief Programme is coordinated and facilitated by the CGF. It requires members of the organising committee to travel to the following host city of the Commonwealth Games to provide presentations, discussions and workshops on key areas of planning and delivery (e.g. legacy planning, security, and transportation). The Glasgow 2014 Debrief Programme ran for three days in October 2014, and saw 80 members of the Glasgow organising committee travel to the Gold Coast in October 2014 (Osborne, 2014). Respondent4 described the value of the debrief session to the sustainability team:

I remember when I had to get the Glasgow debrief, they came and spoke to us about everything they'd learned in Glasgow. I thought they were reasonably honest about what they experienced with ISO 20121. The things I always took in most was what was really difficult and challenging, and what went wrong... For example, being open to criticism from stakeholders and addressing their issues rather than running away from them was a really important lesson that we've had to deal with here as well.

While the challenges of using the CGKMP as a mechanism to diffuse ISO 20121 are apparent, the face-to-face interaction between organising committees displayed evidence of selective diffusion. However, based on respondents' experiences with the transfer of knowledge programme, this was not viewed as an effective means of diffusion of the standard.

### ***5.3.3 Transformation 2022***

The CGF's governance plan, Transformation 2022 (2015b), provides evidence of conceptual work as the governance plan adopts main principles of ISO 20121 and articulates the new vision of the Commonwealth Games to key partners and stakeholders:

Transformation 2022 is the new strategic plan for the Commonwealth Games. There's a lot of stuff in there about what the Commonwealth Games wants to do as an event, and it goes well beyond sport. Then if you start thinking about legacy and sustainability, and the pitch is bigger than sport, then the impacts of the Games become bigger than sport (Respondent31).

The framework of Transformation 2022 is segmented into the following four strategic priority areas: innovative and inspirational Games, good governance and management, strong partnerships, and a valued brand. Although the CGF does not reference ISO 20121 within Transformation 2022, the sustainable development principles within ISO 20121 (i.e. inclusivity, transparency, stewardship, and integrity) are integrated into these strategic priorities.

While Transformation 2022 was released three years prior to GC2018, several key aspects were integrated into GOLDOC's delivery of the event. For instance, the first

strategic priority area, delivering an innovative and inspirational Games, is guided by the following principle and first key action:

To be inspiring and impactful through our decisions, actions and narrative. We aim to maximise efficiency and effectiveness in our delivery of a world-class event with real community relevance that is both affordable and universally appealing ... By Q3 2015, approve a new Sports Programme of compulsory and optional sports (including para-sports), and associated athlete quotas, athlete attraction strategies, athlete performance pathways, stabilised competition formats and optimised competition schedules for the Commonwealth Games in 2018 and beyond (CGF, 2015b, p.24).

This priority area aligns with the local community event sustainability objective described in ISO 20121:

In the planning and construction of new venues, consideration should be given to legacy issues, such as the impacts on local communities, universal accessibility and the global environment as well as the potential long-term use of the new facilities (ISO 20121, p 27).

In 2013, GOLDOC's proposal for the inclusion of beach volleyball in the GC2018 sports programme was denied as it failed to meet the strict Games inclusion criteria set by the CGF (FIVB, 2013). However, following the publication of Transformation 2022, GOLDOC was permitted to include beach volleyball within the GC2018 sports programme. Respondent25 described the significance of the inclusion of beach volleyball for the Games:

Beach volleyball has been added to the program only recently, so we've added another sport which is great, and that's going to be in Southern Gold Coast as well. That area in the Southern Gold Coast didn't have much going on for the Games until the announcement. People wouldn't be going down there too much, but now beach volleyball is down there, that opens the whole city up to a lot more benefits all the way up and down the city as well. Now you won't have tourists clustered in one area of the city, which spreads out the benefits to local businesses. More importantly, from a city perspective, there will be significant media coverage of the event right next to one of the most pristine beaches the Gold Coast has to offer, which will likely lead to more tourism for the city in the future.

Stamm's definitions of the four types of diffusion work (i.e. concrete, broad, selective, and conceptual) imply "purposive action" aimed at the dissemination and persuasion of a standard under study. However, the CGF's diffusion of ISO 20121 indicates that diffusion work does not necessarily require purposive action. Rather, diffusion work may be the result of an unintended consequence. For the CGF, the diffusion of ISO 20121 was a by-product of its efforts to maintain the institutional legitimacy of the Commonwealth Games. Although the CGF may not have intentionally diffused the standard, every Commonwealth Games organising committee since the standard's creation, as well as future instalments of the event, has implemented ISO 20121 (or is in the process of implementation). Prior to having their 2022 hosting rights stripped by the CGF, Durban (South Africa) employed a sustainability consultancy firm in 2016. The firm's report on Durban's sustainability programme stated:

Both Glasgow 2014 and Gold Coast 2018 have developed event sustainability management systems that comply with ISO 20121 international standard. Given the CGF requirement to implement a credible sustainability programme that meets international standards, the use of ISO 20121 emerges as a minimum requirement for the sustainability programme for Durban 2022 (FutureWorks, 2016, p. 14).

#### **5.4 Gold Coast (2018) Commonwealth Games Bid Company (GCCBC)**

The GCCBC's inclusion of ISO 20121 in its bid for the 2018 Commonwealth Games was a form of concrete diffusion work as it directly persuaded GOLDOC to adopt the standard. The GCCBC referenced the standard within the bid, stating:

The OC will continue to monitor initiatives in the development of event-related Environmentally Sustainable Development (ESD) benchmarks and compliance standards, and where appropriate, will refine strategies as and when these benchmarks and standards are released. This may include initiatives under development such as the International Organisation for Standardisation's (ISO) Events Sustainable Management System (Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games Bid Ltd, 2011, p. 149).

Respondents highlighted the significance of the GCCBC's inclusion of ISO 20121 within the bid as it was the first time the standard had ever been included in any city's bid for a mega-event: "So, the Gold Coast Organising Committee have been very forward with

this. They've used the standard from the start ... it's the first time, that I know of anyways, the standard has been included in the bid" (Respondent3). The importance of the inclusion of the standard within the Candidate City File submitted by the GCCBC was that it established the various commitments involved in hosting GC2018. "The bid book was sort of ground breaking in many respects ... it was the first major event that actually had ISO 20121 in the bid book ... your bid is a promise, and it's very difficult to negotiate changes in that promise" (Respondent 31). GOLDOC was responsible for upholding those commitments, including those in the sustainability section of the bid. Thus, as an organisation, GOLDOC was legally accountable to uphold its commitment to implement ISO 20121. Respondent11 explained it this way:

When you have a look at the signatures on the bid document, none of those people are actually associated with the Games anymore. What the bid document did was hold us accountable to follow-through with the adoption of the standard .... The Commonwealth Games Federation was very savvy in making sure that this commitment was seen through, even if there was a change in government.

Respondents' comments regarding the requirement to follow-through with commitments in the bid were confirmed on the CGF's website: "The CGF Coordination Commission (CoCom) oversees and ensures compliance with the commitments and undertakings the Games Partners made when they bid for the Games, as featured in the Host City Contract" (CGF, 2017, p. 9). Thus, these statements imply what DiMaggio and Powell (1983) described, and Kelly et al. (2019) empirically demonstrated, that formalised hosting agreements can be used by event owners as a subtle form of coercive pressure.

Competitive forces intensified for GCCBC as a surprise bid for the 2018 Commonwealth Games was announced in early 2010 by the city of Hambantota (Sri Lanka). In the struggle to obtain a valuable resource – the rights to host the 2018 Commonwealth Games – GCCBC pre-emptively committed to implementing ISO 20121. Indeed, ISO 20121 was perceived as the future "gold standard" (Respondent23) of sustainable event management, even though it was yet to be released at the time of the bid. O'Brien and Slack (2004) demonstrate that when competitive forces among organisations for the recruitment of valuable resources within a field intensifies, some organisations will mimic the behaviour of other organisations perceived as legitimate and that implement innovative practices. Even though uncertainty persists around the focal innovation, the initial level of perceived success



prompts mimetic behaviour (O'Brien & Slack, 2003; 2004). Indeed, the GCCBC sought to position its bid in the vanguard of sustainable event management, similar to how, "...the Sydney Games were at the forefront of greening the Olympic Games" (Respondent19).

Normative forces also played an influential role in the inclusion of ISO 20121 into GCCBC's bid. A number of actors involved with the staging of the Sydney Games were also members of the GCCBC. They are often referred to as the 'Green Games' due to the Greenpeace winning design for the Olympic village (Newman, 1999). The 2000 Sydney Games:

...set the benchmark for so many different events, but also for sustainability as well  
.... Some of the guys from Sydney, like [name removed], brought their valuable knowledge and experience from there and it was a huge reason why I believe our bid was ultimately successful" (Respondent11).

The education, training, experience, values and norms of these key actors, that put sustainability on the forefront during the 2000 Sydney Games, were strategically recruited to join the GCCBC's bid in hopes of once again setting a sustainability benchmark for future events.

## **5.5 GOLDOC**

GOLDOC's internal sustainability team found itself in a peculiar position as an adopter of ISO 20121, as well as the most active diffuser of the standard within the GC2018 field. The sustainability team engaged in a variety of broad, conceptual, and selective diffusion activities. While Stamm (2019) identified consultants as the primary coordinator of diffusion activities in the case of ISO 26000, this section highlights the important role event organisers played in coordinating diffusion activities with reference to ISO 20121. These diffusion activities are addressed in the subsections that follow and include: annual sustainability reporting; formation of a Sustainable Events Working Group; the staging of Annual Sustainability Forums; and, the formation of a human rights policy.

### ***5.5.1 GOLDOC Sustainability Documents***

GOLDOC's publication of 10 sustainability-focused organisational documents were one of the few examples of broad diffusion as they detailed information about ISO 20121, as well as the organisation's experience with its adoption. In the focal research context, broad diffusion refers to the dissemination of ISO 20121 to a wide range of potential

adopters through a variety of media. This type of diffusion does not necessarily aim to persuade adoption of the standard, but rather increase actors' awareness of the standard. Within the early stages of the diffusion of standards, Stamm (2019) posited that, "broad diffusion tends to precede and to be conditional for other types of diffusion" (p.151). This statement indicates the importance of the dissemination of standard-specific information as a precursor to the other types of diffusion. For instance, GOLDOC's 2014-2015 annual sustainability report described an overview of the standard:

ISO 20121 is an international standard created specifically for the events industry. This standard provides guidance for the development of a management system and processes within an organisation to ensure that sustainability is adequately embedded in the decision-making process. It addresses organisational governance around sustainability, budget and resourcing requirements, training, policy-making, monitoring and reporting processes (GOLDOC, 2015, p. 29).

The report goes on to detail specific actions required within the standard and GOLDOC's experience with how the organisation implemented ISO 20121:

As part of the implementation of GOLDOC's sustainable events management system in accordance with ISO 20121, the Annual Sustainability Forum has been particularly successful as an engagement mechanism and has highlighted stakeholder concerns such as: The need for the community to leverage the opportunities around GC2018 to educate and raise awareness of sustainability issues ... (p.26).

GOLDOC's sustainability policy outlined the philosophy of sustainability adopted for GC2018. The development of the sustainability policy was critical for two reasons: first, it was a document that defined how GOLDOC would contextualise sustainability into strategies and actions; and second, it was crucial for the dissemination of information to internal and external stakeholders. For example, one respondent from GOLDOC explained that, "Our policy shows interested parties that sustainability isn't just a flashy word. There are objective outcomes that we're held accountable for" (Respondent8).

Interestingly, a gradual shift from broad to conceptual diffusion was evident from 2015-2017 following the publication of GOLDOC's nine sustainability priorities within its Sustainability Policy (2016). The nine priorities, illustrated in Table 5.1, subsequently became the main medium of GOLDOC's diffusion work:

One of the outcomes was also to become a leader, to demonstrate leadership in sustainable motives. Then we attract further events to this region using ISO as that framework to say, here are our priorities, we'll do the work in demystifying ISO so that then we can attract further events that actually want to have sustainability... Certainly, telling the story and communicating that message is a key part of it. Getting our story out there, letting people know, and getting our priorities on the website as well (Respondent11).

This statement exemplifies a shift to mainly implicit forms of diffusion. Further illustrating this, there was a steady decline in the number of instances ISO 20121 was explicitly referenced in GOLDOC's annual sustainability reports over this four-year period: 2015 (19), 2016 (9), 2017 (4) and 2018 (1). Furthermore, GOLDOC's engagement in broad diffusion was mainly contained within the publication of organisational documents.

Table 5.1:  
*GOLDOC's nine sustainability priorities*

<b>Sustainability Priority</b>	<b>Description</b>
Food and Beverage	To provide sustainable food and beverage options and reduce food packaging waste.
Transport	To encourage public and active transport as the primary modes of transport to GC2018 events.
Accessibility	To eliminate barrier (physical or otherwise) to a safe, independent and dignified GC2018 experience.
Inclusivity and Diversity	To stage an event that welcomes participation by people of every gender, socio-economic status, orientation or ability.
Sustainable Procurement	To responsibly manage our supply chain and enhance our sustainability performance through sustainable sourcing and material selection practices.
Economy and Community	To ensure the needs and expectations of community are considered. To raise awareness, share knowledge and build capacity. To promote healthy and active living.
Environmental Impacts	To protect the health of our oceans and waterways by reducing use of pollutants such as plastic bags and helium balloons.
Waste	To reduce waste to landfill through innovative waste management practices and adopting Waste and Recovery Hierarchy (avoid, reduce, reuse, recycle, recover, dispose).
Carbon	To minimise carbon emissions attributable to GC2018.

### ***5.5.2 Sustainable Events Working Group (SEWG)***

Selective diffusion of ISO 20121 occurred through GOLDOC's association with the GCCC's Sustainable Events Working Group (SEWG), which, "was formed in May 2016 with the purpose of collaborating and advocating for opportunities to maximize sustainable management practices at Gold Coast Eve. The working group was created out of GCCC's

identification of the need to produce more sustainable events, particularly in the area of waste management. Respondent24 described how GOLDOC's involvement within SEWG broadened its perspective on sustainability:

The waste issue was identified by the community, so we decided we needed to include that as an action within our solid waste strategy ... we don't have recycling at any, I don't think, of our major venues for events. So that's what we've decided we needed to tackle. That's slowly starting to happen ... The idea was to get a sustainable events working group together. We were focusing primarily on waste to begin with, but then when we were talking about it with GOLDOC they encouraged us to expand the scope of the working group to include all sustainability actions .... Our initial terms of reference that were drafted, I only looked at waste as a sustainability issue, but in our first meeting that we had two weeks ago, we all agreed that we needed to expand the scope to GOLDOC's framework in the areas that are possible for us.

Respondent15 also discussed GOLDOC's influence on the SEWG:

A lot of the discussion has been around their nine sustainability priorities and how they're incorporating that into the Games. The one thing I think that we're going to need to be aware of is that there will be some learnings out of that. We won't be able to replicate their model ... It's just not applicable to 75% of those smaller or medium events here on the Coast. It'll be about picking out what areas we actually already cover within City Council that their model can actually have an impact on. Certainly, the Gold Coast 600s motorsport events or the Gold Coast Marathons would be events that could benefit from GOLDOC's model (Respondent15).

The nine sustainability priorities were not only attributable to GOLDOC, but were also identified as issues for GOLDOC and the Gold Coast community:

There are nine priorities and not just GOLDOC's Commonwealth Games priorities, they translate really to any event. They're the community issues that people see as important...I think a really big legacy as well is by having the structure to process and identify the nine priorities and using GRI to report and capture what all the FAs are doing against the nine priorities (Respondent8).

### *5.5.3 Annual Sustainability Forums*

GOLDOC's extensive use of conceptual diffusion was most evident in its hosting of annual Sustainability Forums in which key community stakeholders were invited to participate. The forums were held annually from 2014 to 2017. The researcher participated in these forums from 2015 to 2017. GOLDOC spoke broadly to the purpose of these forums:

From a sustainability perspective, stakeholder engagement is conducted regularly through our Annual Sustainability Forum. This is our key sustainability engagement vehicle and is supported by other smaller engagements as required (GOLDOC, 2015, p.23).

While ISO 20121 was referred in the forums as the framework in which GOLDOC delivered, "GC2018 to international standards of best practice" (GOLDOC, 2014, p.29), the forums' purpose was to engage with stakeholders interested in GOLDOC's sustainability performance. These forums were quite unique to a mega-event, as they presented a means of communication with GOLDOC for peripheral actors such as community stakeholder groups and prospective suppliers:

From my involvement in GOLDOC going for that ISO process so far, for me, the standout component is the consultation element of it and really trying to create a bit of a movement around all those sustainability components that they've identified and really using those sustainability forums to drive where their priorities are. There is always going to be that corporate and political overlay, but it seems to me that that's really a driving force with that standard; that it's really quite consultative-based and it's not about someone just in a room documenting and implementing something nice (Respondent20).

The Annual Forums constituted conceptual diffusion as they focused on GOLDOC's approach to sustainability:

... GOLDOC has been holding its Sustainability Forum annually since March 2014. This is a great opportunity to gather together Games partners, community groups, other event organisations, venue owners and other interested stakeholders to discuss sustainability as it relates to GC2018 and to identify community expectations and issued (GOLDOC, 2015, p. 47)

In 2015, the focus of the Forum was a workshop among attendees to identify the most pertinent sustainability issues for GC2018. A professional graphic facilitator synthesised

and drew out key themes in real-time as the group communicated sustainability issues; thereby, creating a visual story as the workshop unfolded (refer to GOLDOC, 2015, p.47 for an illustration of GOLDOC's sustainability issue identification). The discussions from the 2015 Sustainability Forum had a significant influence on the establishment of GOLDOC's nine sustainability priorities.

Although the overall attendance of community members at the 2016 Sustainability Forum increased from the previous year, there was much less engagement between GOLDOC and attendees comparatively. The majority for the Forum was presentations given by various members of GOLDOC, with a specific focus on each of the nine sustainability priority areas. The following year at the 2016 Sustainability Forum attendees broke into nine groups to discuss material issues related to each of GOLDOC's nine sustainability priorities. The researcher participated in the procurement workshop in which the group was assigned to address the following question: *Who needs to do what to encourage potential suppliers to adopt sustainability practices for GC2018?* The group was made up of nine members, including the researcher, with the majority being local suppliers who were still in GOLDOC's procurement process for GC2018. There were two main topics discussed within the 30-minute session. First, there was clear frustration among suppliers with their ability to communicate with GOLDOC, with one member of the group session calling the procurement process "a joke." Another prospective supplier of the Games questioned how GOLDOC could encourage local suppliers to adopt sustainable practices if the organisation refused to directly communicate with them. The lack of communication between GOLDOC and prospective suppliers illustrates the boundary of the GC2018; whereby prospective suppliers felt marginalised. The communication issue was addressed the GOLDOC's subsequent annual Sustainability report: "One of the key outcomes of the day was the desire for the community to have more engagement with GOLDOC" (GOLDOC, 2017b, p. 37). The second topic of discussion within the group was an inability to incorporate sustainability into their business practices during the lead-up to the event as there "wouldn't be time to" according to one prospective supplier. This timing issue reflects the temporal shift detailed later in this section whereby the GC2018 field shifts from a strategic planning phase to an operational planning phase. Following the workshops, each group presented the material issues discussed in each working group, which was also illustrated by a graphic facilitator (refer to GOLDOC, 2017b, p.37 for an illustration of the summary of the working group session).

#### ***5.5.4 Human Rights Policy***

Another example of GOLDOC's use of conceptual diffusion work was through the organisation's Human Rights Policy (2017a). The policy was created to align GC2018 with the CGF's Transformation 2022 strategic priority of "good governance and management." This particular CGF priority is, "underpinned by a strong commitment to, and respect of human rights, environment and sustainability, health, safety and wellbeing as well as accessibility and inclusivity" (CGF, 2015b, p. 12). Conceptual diffusion on the part of GOLDOC was evident as the sustainable development principles within ISO 20121 (inclusivity, transparency, stewardship, and integrity) are integrated within the CGF's human rights policy. Furthermore, GOLDOC also acknowledged the importance of ISO 20121 in identifying its human rights issues within the document:

From an early stage, GOLDOC implemented a sustainability management system in accordance with the recently introduced international standard ISO 20121, strong governance processes, a reporting structure and numerous advisory bodies and working groups. Through the implementation of ISO 20121, a materiality assessment was undertaken of the environmental and social impacts of GC2018, which highlighted some key social impact areas. Following the publication of the Policy, further due diligence and a gap analysis was undertaken to review impacts through a 'human rights lens'. This included a further risk and impact assessment and stakeholder consultation (GOLDOC, 2018, p.8).

Although GOLDOC was the most prominent actor in the diffusion of ISO 20121, its position as both adopter and diffuser made it difficult to simultaneously implement the standard, while also engaging in meaningful explicit diffusion of ISO 20121. The sustainability team recognised GOLDOC's ability to use GC2018 as a platform to disseminate information about the value of ISO 20121 for potential adopters to create "a sustainable events city" (Respondent11). However, the growing efforts put towards the implementation and maintenance of the standard limited their ability to engage in broad diffusion leading up to the Games.

Our core roles are in advising, technical advisory, a bit of compliance, and communications ... [name removed] and I am so busy day-to-day with the compliance and the technical advisory stuff. I think that making sure that happens



and that we're sustainable takes precedence over communicating all the good stories, but it's not more important, it's just more urgent or necessary (Respondent8).

Respondent4 also emphasised GOLDOC's key role in the diffusion of the standard, but acknowledged that it was secondary to the implementation and maintenance of the standard:

...We're hoping that what we leave behind, the city and state committee leverage and help make this a sustainable events destination. That's how we want to pass it on. We want to promote the work that we're doing around the standard, but in terms of our focus, we need to be focused on the task.

These comments indicate how agency impacts which form of diffusion work actors engage in. Battilana and D'ahunno (2009) conceptualised agency within an institutional work perspective as, "a temporally embedded process of social engagement, informed by the past, but oriented toward the future and toward the present" (p.47). Thus, agency has three distinct dimensions: iterative (habit), projection (imagination), and practical-evaluation (judgement). This view of agency implies that actors' intentions are dependent upon the dimension of agency that dominates a particular instance of diffusion work. For GOLDOC, this shift from a future-oriented mentality to attending to one that focused on managing immediate situations, or the "...need to get Games ready," (Respondent8), resulted in a practical-evaluative approach to diffusion referred to as "leadership," "inspiring" and "telling the story". Similarly, Respondent3 stated, "...the approach I have is that we just have to keep telling the story and inspiring until we get there so there's a great opportunity with the Gold Coast".

The practical-evaluative agency displayed by GOLDOC illustrated a passive approach to diffusion as a by-product of their adoption of the standard. In his article on effective event leverage, Chalip (2014) described a fundamental flaw within the legacy framework of major events by stating that, "event organizers have an event to stage, and legacies are secondary to that goal. Adding a responsibility for legacy to event organizing is not merely a distraction, it is an added expense and impediment for event organizers" (pp. 6-7). Indeed, these findings indicate that the role of organising committees as diffusers of ISO 20121, although important, may be limited to mostly implicit forms of diffusion.

## **5.6 Governments**

Governments play a critical role in the widespread diffusion of ISO standards as they "can use their purchasing power or regulatory presence to encourage or require certification under certain conditions" (Castka & Corbett, 2015, p. 347). However, as evidenced in this

section, this group of diffusion actors played a minimal role in the diffusion of ISO 20121 within the GC2018 interstitial field by demonstrating only conceptual forms of diffusion activities related to the standard. As there was no evidence of any diffusion activities on the part of the Australian Government, this section begins with the Queensland State Government then moves onto the GCCC.

#### ***5.6.1 Queensland State Government***

Queensland State Government activities in the diffusion of ISO 20121 were identified as conceptual work embedded in organisational documents. While the State Government's role within GC2018 covered nearly every aspect of the event, the "Embracing 2018 Legacy Program" best aligns with its role as a key actor in the diffusion of ISO 20121 leading up to GC2018. Embracing 2018 focused on maximising the benefits of hosting GC2018 for the entire State of Queensland. Within Embracing 2018, Queensland State Government aimed to use GC2018 as a leading model for sustainable event delivery that could be transferred to future events hosted in the state. This perceived benefit referred to various legacy projects that were created as a result of the event, such as the Accessibility Program and the Embracing 2018 Sport Assets Legacy Program. None of these programs explicitly promoted the diffusion of ISO 20121 for future events but focused on critical areas within the standard.

Following GC2018, Tourism Events Queensland, the state-owned agency responsible for promoting tourism and events in the state of Queensland, published the *Queensland Events Guide* (2018). This guide was designed to, "assist local event organisers through the various phases of an event's lifecycle" (p. 2). The comprehensive guide covers 10 areas of event management, such as risk management and post-event evaluation. The 112-page guide details nearly every facet of ISO 20121 including a description of all four sustainable development principles within the standard: inclusivity, stewardship, integrity, and transparency. However, the standard itself is not mentioned at all in the guide.

#### ***5.6.2 Gold Coast City Council (GCCC)***

In regard to the SEWG discussed in the GOLDOC section of this chapter, the GCCC has yet to produce any outcomes that might constitute diffusion work from the Working Group. However, the researcher was informed in a subsequent conversation with a member of the group that a sustainable events guide will be published in late 2019.

The nominal ISO 20121 diffusion activities demonstrated by the GCCC were due to perceptions of the standard within the GCCC being, “a GOLDOC thing” (Respondent6). For instance, Respondent20 stated that, “GOLDOC are responsible for delivering the standard and that’s within their reign. We actually don't have anything to do with that.” Meanwhile, Respondent23 discussed sustainability initiatives as an issue within the GCCC:

My argument is that in New South Wales, Victoria, and South Australia, they already have a lot of these mandatory rules in place for these events coming in. We’re just so much further behind them here (Queensland), and it’s unfortunate for people like me who are trying to push sustainability ... There's a major city wide event that's happening soon, that I can't name, and I identified that they don't even recycle at this event. It runs for a few days and we discovered that City Events had offered them through their in-kind support free disposal at a GCCC waste facility. So, it wipes out any incentive to recycle because they're getting it free. I don't think that's offered to many events because it's not in the policy, but you're just like, ‘Well, that makes what we're trying to achieve so much harder because you've just provided this massive incentive for them to throw everything into landfill because it's free.’

While the ISO 20121 diffusion activities were less evident, the GCCC’s diffusion activities in ISO 9001 through the city’s Business, Trade, and Investment Program was prominent:

The Games were the catalyst to say, “How do we move a semi-pro business, never worked for government before, into a professional business that could work for government and also look at overseas?” Originally, we had about 200-odd businesses we have worked with in supply chain development in construction. Through that, about 60 of those went through and did just an information workshop, that ISO 9000, the management principles and how they could implement that into their business. A lot of them just started that and started the implementation process. We then moved forward and took 15 businesses through ISO 9000 training, which we paid for, which was \$2,500 per head (Respondent21).

The GCCC’s ISO 9001 was documented in the City’s *GC2018 Benefits* (2016) document, which identified field-configuration outcomes that were attributed to GC2018 such as the attraction of three national sport governing bodies to relocate to the Gold Coast, and improvements in the establishment of the Gold Coast Health and Knowledge Precinct. The

document also detailed the City's strategy to maximising outcomes for the Gold Coast through the application of "a benefits management framework to help inform strategic decisions and allocate resources" (p. 4). Two of the 16 main aspirations of the GCCC related to ISO 20121 were: "The Gold Coast is recognized as a premier event destination ... [and] Our sport and recreation industry is sustainable" (GCCC, 2016, p. 6).

Following Respondent21's explanation, the researcher asked if there was potential to run the same program through the GCCC for event organisations implementing ISO 20121. Respondent21 replied, "the city probably wouldn't do that. There would need to be a financial incentive for the city to fund a program for ISO 20121 and right now there just isn't because it's so new." As noted above in relation to the ISO 9001 program, the financial incentive for the city was "to move Gold Coast businesses from semi-pro into professional leaving the city in really good shape after the Games are done" (Respondent21). Thus, GCCC did not view ISO 20121 accreditation as a necessary endeavour to position the city to host more events which, in turn, did not provide a financial incentive for the GCCC to fund an ISO 20121 program for local event organisations. However, a similar "professionalisation" in the form of ISO 20121 accreditation may come to fruition for destinations to evolve into sport event destinations, as Buathong and Lai (2017) posited:

In time, demonstrating compliance to ISO 20121 is likely to become a minimum requirement for anyone wishing to operate in the events industry as event clients, sponsors, local authorities and other key stakeholders [who] choose to work with organisations that have implemented the standard (p.3).

Thus, if this prediction for the events industry does come to fruition, it would mean a lost opportunity for the GCCC to leverage the Games to be recognised as a "premier event destination" (GCCC, 2016).

The only evidence of ISO 20121 being explicitly mentioned in GCCC organisational documents was in the Gold Coast Event Book (2015) as a promotional document aimed at attracting events to the city. The Event Book markets major event venues in the city as well as distinguishing features of the local events industry. One of the features identified is a focus on, "... creating and supporting sustainable events that leave a lasting positive legacy" (GCCC, 2015, p. 52). The book provides a short description of ISO 20121 in relation to its use at the Commonwealth Games:

In accordance with the commitment by the Games partners to deliver a sustainable Games, the Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games Corporation (GOLDOC) has

now implemented a sustainable events management system in accordance with the provisions of ISO 20121. ISO 20121 is a new international standard in sustainable event management which was developed during, and is a legacy from, the London 2012 Olympic Games. This standard guides an organisation in the development of policies, procedures and frameworks that will support a culture of sustainable thinking (p.52).

## **5.7 Consultants**

As described in the previous Chapter, consultants were key actors in the diffusion of ISO 20121 as they engaged in multiple forms of diffusion work through various roles. Brès and Gond (2014) revealed how consultants acted as social and environmental issue translators who were able to transform these issues into sellable products and services. Their complementary roles as sustainability standards' *co-designers*, *interpreters*, and *promoters* led to the creation and institutionalisation of the Bureau de normalisation du Québec (BNQ) 2100; a provincial CSR standard within Canada that was derived from ISO 26000. Similarly, the consultants within the GC2018 field acted as ISO 20121 co-designers, interpreters, and promoters that diffused ISO 20121 within the GC2018 field. These roles complement Stamm's (2019) four types of diffusion work and are presented as such in this section.

### **5.7.1 Co-designers**

In the context of GC2018, consultants' role as co-designers refers to their involvement in the creation of ISO 20121. Stamm (2019) identified individuals who participated in the drafting of ISO 26000 as "insiders" due to their expertise in the content and development of the standard. Regarding GC2018, consultants were of particular importance in the diffusion of ISO 20121 as they were the only key actors identified as insiders of the standard. Their role as co-designers was an example of diffusion work as they turned their insider knowledge of ISO 20121 into products and services such as workshops, seminars and online guides, while also emphasising their involvement in the development of the standard, as a "perceived legitimating effect" of their consultancy. The most notable example was GOLDOC's employment of Sustainable Events Ltd to assist in the implementation of ISO 20121. The managing director of Sustainable Events Ltd came from the UK and was also the Chair of the ISO Project Committee (ISO/PC 250) and as such, played an integral role in the actual creation of ISO 20121:

GOLDOC engaged an external consultancy closely involved in the development of the ISO 20121 standard to conduct stakeholder workshops and to assist the sustainability team to identify the greatest economic, social and environmental impacts of the event that were within GOLDOC's control or influence (GOLDOC, 2017, p. 39).

ISO/PC 250 was comprised of national standards experts from 25 countries, as well as 10 experts from 10 countries who acted as observers, and eight stakeholder organisations from the events industry with a strong interest in sustainability (ISO, 2012). The employment of the UK sustainability consultant who was an important ISO 20121 insider suggests a normative mechanism by which the standard is diffusing across mega-events. Kolah (2013) predicted this normative process by stating: "As a result, Games organisers across the world, including the Local Organising Committee of the Olympic Games in Brazil 2016, are likely to seek UK sector expertise in adopting and applying the ISO 20121" (p.35). At the 2017 Sustainability Forum, GOLDOC's consultant described how she became involved with GC2018, alluding to her insider position and "knocking on the door" of GOLDOC's General Manager (Field notes). Conversely, GOLDOC's association with their consultant's insider status in the above quote, as well as during their annual Sustainability Forums, indicates a perceived legitimating effect of their delivery of a sustainable event.

### ***5.7.2 Interpreters***

Brès and Gond (2014) described sustainability consultants as interpreters who, through the construction of a market, connect sustainability issues to organisations seeking to adopt CSR and sustainability-related practices. Thus, their most prominent role in the diffusion of standards is to assist organisations with the implementation of standards. This primary role is significant for the diffusion of ISO 20121 as it is the most prominent form of concrete diffusion. An example of this interpreter role related to the issue of ISO 20121 certification. Respondent4 pointed out that GOLDOC's assumption "...was always that we'll have to be third party certified" (Respondent4). However, she went on to explain that their sustainability consultant "... told us that it isn't necessary to get third party certification. In fact, [name removed] told us that it was in our best interest not to so that we can demonstrate the importance of dedicating resources to implementing the standard and not to getting third party certified." Thus, the organising committee did not follow through with the full

certification of the standard. While respondents did not give an exact monetary amount that certification would have cost GOLDOC, they stated there was a drastic difference in quotes given to them that ranged from “...in the six figures” (Respondent4) to, “... in the 5 figures” (Respondent8).

Although the role of interpreter is mainly an example of concrete diffusion, it is also a factor in broad and selective diffusion. For instance, the second part of the 2016 sustainability forums required attendees to break off into workshops to identify material issues based on the nine sustainability priorities presented in Table 5.1 in the GOLDOC section of this chapter. GOLDOC’s sustainability consultant facilitated the workshop. Following a 30-minute session, each group presented pertinent issues related to each theme. Interestingly, the sustainable procurement group was comprised mostly of prospective local suppliers of the Games who were concerned with GOLDOC’s procurement process. As the facilitator of the session, GOLDOC’s sustainability consultant stated that their concerns over the procurement process were an issue to address to the procurement department of GOLDOC and not the Sustainability Team. However, sustainable procurement is one of four key foci of ISO 20121, as stated by ISO (2012), “...when integrating sustainable development management into the procurement process ... minimizing the negative impacts of the supply chain itself, in particular the social aspects (e.g. by giving preference to local suppliers ...)” (p. 36, parentheses in original). With regards to the diffusion of ISO 20121 in this instance, the standard was misrepresented as not pertaining to procurement issues; thereby, presenting a potential barrier to the diffusion of the standard, which is discussed in-depth in Chapter Six.

### ***5.7.3 Promoters***

Brès and Gond (2014) identified the promotion role of consultants through their work in the creation of soft regulations that defined the content of responsible practices for event management, which later led to the creation of the BNQ 21000 standard. While the promotional work preceded the standard within Brès and Gond’s study, the GC2018 consultants acted as promoters in various ways to help grow the ISO 20121 standard within and beyond the GC2018 region after it was published. These promotional activities were forms of broad diffusion work and were mostly evident on the consultant’s website in the form of case studies, webinars, news articles, and “how-to” information.

In October 2015, the consultant hosted a “Sustainable Events Management for the Gold Coast Sustainability Forum” that aimed to persuade local event organisations to adopt ISO 20121. The researcher was granted permission to attend the meeting, engage in discussion with attendees, and take field notes. It was evident that the meeting mainly focused on environmental sustainability as one attendee pointed out that the Forum did not discuss any issues related to economic sustainability such as local supplier procurement. Reflecting on the Forum Respondent3, stated:

There’s just not enough support in the events community. One of the learnings from the Royal Pines Meeting was what has stopped the supply chain from coming forward and wanting to implement the standard on the Gold Coast. Sometimes in my darkest moments I think that people are just trying to go to work at 9:00 just to survive and they don’t want to really make a big difference. Then other times I understand a little bit more of the human nature side of things and the fear of being the first one that goes to the boss and says ‘we should be using ISO 20121, do we have the budget for it?’ ... That’s the biggest barrier right now because we really could be running those workshops through [name removed] on the Gold Coast, but there just hasn’t been the uptake and that’s what’s disappointing, and it’s not just on the Gold Coast, it’s everywhere I now think we’re running out of time any month now and we’ve run out of time because it’s only two years until the event and if you’re going to be the conference centre or any of the other partners implementing it, you need to be in action now.

As this Sustainability Forum did not lead the adoption of the standard, or even subsequent attempts at another Sustainability Forum, this diffusion activity highlighted an example of failed diffusion work.

## **5.8 Universities and Researchers**

Universities and researchers have a unique role in the diffusion process of standards as they not only disseminate information pertaining to standards but also add to their legitimacy through the empirical research they undertake and the conceptual advances and publications that stem from this (Stamm, 2019). However, in the case of this research, and unprecedented for event organising committees in the mega-event landscape, in 2015, GOLDOC entered into an exclusive partnership agreement with Griffith University. While such an agreement represented a welcomed tightening of bonds between industry and the



research community, it also created a formalised barrier to the involvement of researchers from other universities in research directly involving GOLDOC. Thus, delimiting researchers conducting research in the GC2018 interstitial issue field and also limiting the diffusion work of ISO 20121 by universities and researchers outside of the exclusive partnership.

Nonetheless, the diffusion work carried out by universities and researchers included all four of Stamm's (2019) modes of diffusion work. Chronologically, the first evidence in the data of diffusion work was selective diffusion that involved the collaboration of researchers from two local Gold Coast universities – Griffith University and Bond University. This work took place before the exclusive university partnership agreement was reached between GOLDOC and Griffith University in 2015 and took the form of a two-part report in 2013 (Pye & Thomson, 2013; Pye, Thomson, & Kirkpatrick, 2013). As stated by Respondent31, “We actually commissioned a researcher on the Gold Coast to do some research for us [the GCCC] about legacy from other major sport events.” The production of this report constituted selective diffusion as not only is ISO 20121 mentioned in the report, but within ISO 20121 itself, it is stated that, “In the planning and construction of new venues, consideration should be given to legacy issues, such as the impacts on local communities” (p. 27). The first part of the report, titled *Assessing Legacy*, proposed “12 Statements of Principles for Generating Legacy.” The second of these 12 principles was: “Make sustainability a prime consideration in all GC2018 planning and allocate post-2018 funding to areas where sustainability can be achieved” (Pye, et al., 2013, p. 14). The second part of the report goes on to state that in order to deliver on this key principle, “Sustainability is reliant on consistent funding, and a continuous level of stakeholder/community support, particularly at the early planning stages” (Pye & Thomson, 2013, p. 9). (Chapter Six picks up on this point and provides a framework in which sustainability can be integrated into the event at the community-level in this early planning stage.)

Following the exclusive university partnership agreement between Griffith University and GOLDOC, it was evident that the barrier established (refer to section 4.4.7) had an inhibiting influence on the ability of universities and researchers to do diffusion work. For example, prior to the partnership announcement, the researcher for this study had preliminary agreement to conduct participatory action research on ISO 20121 in collaboration with GOLDOC. Following the partnership announcement, the researcher was

informed by GOLDOC that the proposed research project was no longer possible due to the exclusive nature of its partnership with Griffith University.

As a result of GOLDOC's understandable need to respect the terms of its agreement with Griffith University, the researcher simply adjusted his research strategy. Indeed, though the researcher's ability to undertake diffusion work was inhibited, the collection of primary data became a rare form of concrete diffusion work, as the researcher himself became a source of information of ISO 20121 for potential adopters within the GC2018 interstitial issue field. The interview protocol began with the researcher providing an overview of ISO 20121 to participants. As outlined in the quotes that follow, quite often, participants had little if any prior knowledge of ISO 20121. For example, seven interview participants that were identified as potential end-users of ISO 20121 had either never heard of the standard or were misinformed on the standard's purpose: "I honestly didn't really know about this [ISO 20121] until today ... I know that personally I would be very interested to see what the standard is about" (Respondent9). Another indicative statement highlighting the researcher's concrete diffusion work came from Respondent7 who stated, "By the sounds of it, it seems to be fairly successful and it seems like something that would fit in here with our organisation. I think that's something we should be definitely looking into (Respondent7). Furthermore, the researcher presented research in which ISO 20121 played a central role at academic conferences on the Gold Coast, in Hobart (Australia), and Bern (Switzerland); thereby, constituting broad diffusion work.

The exclusive partnership details between Griffith University and GOLDOC that were described in the previous chapters led to various forms of diffusion work related to ISO 20121. While students were provided with an opportunity to work with the standard in a practical way through internships with GOLDOC's Sustainability Team, a new class was also offered by Griffith University due to GC2018 titled "Organising and Staging Major Events" which included a lecture specifically devoted to sustainable event management. Millar and Park (2018) stated that bringing ISO 20121 into the classroom is "... a good starting point to provide students a practical tool when they enter the workplace. They can also provide some consistency as to what is taught in terms of sustainability by giving them a clear set of sustainable guidelines" (p. 133). Furthermore, the Griffith Centre for Sustainable Enterprise: Sustainability Information Forum that was staged in 2018 provided students with an opportunity to engage with various industry professionals on the topic. This included GOLDOC's Sustainability Team who discussed their approach to implementing

sustainability into GC2018 through ISO 20121. Collectively, these were forms of concrete diffusion work that aimed to normatively integrate sustainability into event management through tertiary education and disseminate knowledge about the standard for future protentional adopters.

There are a number examples of GC2018 sustainability-related research publications on topics such as accessibility (Darcy & Dickson, 2018), economic impact (Clark & Kearns, 2016), and environmental sustainability of the Games (Sarmiento & El Hanandeh, 2018)). As none of these explicitly discussed ISO 20121, they were identified as examples of conceptual diffusion work. The only research publication that explicitly discusses GOLDOC's implementation of ISO 20121 is Powell's (2019) article titled *Commentary: Gold Coast 2018-the innovative and inclusive Games* in which GOLDOC's approach to delivering a sustainable event is uncritically detailed, dubbing the event "...arguably the most sustainable Games ever" (p. 157).

One of the main critiques in event studies is the overly positive and perhaps less than critical portrayal of events as the panacea for a host city's destination image and other problems (Getz, 2012; Baum et al., 2013). Rojek (2014) by stating that, "the positive claims made by event management are excessive and reflect a disturbing myopia about generations of critical study" (p. 39).

As outlined in the previous chapter, there was evidence of this group engaging in diffusion work outside of the academic setting through the EarthCheck Research Institute. EarthCheck persuaded the Sustainability Coordinator at the GCCEC that pursuing ISO 20121 accreditation would help establish the facility as a sustainability champion:

EarthCheck actually approached us and asked if we would like to participate in going through the ISO 20121 certification. They told us that it was progressive and up and coming because it is fairly new in the meetings and events sector and ISO standards in general are prominent (Respondent27).

Although Stamm (2019) posited that "concrete diffusion work is typically undertaken by CSR consultants or CSR managers" (p.149)he quote is an example of concrete diffusion work as EarthCheck's persuasion efforts were aimed at directly at getting the standard adopted by the GCCEC.

The diffusion work discussed in this section highlights how actors' position within the organisational field impacts their ability to engage in institutional work (Battilana, 2006; Zietsma et al., 2017).

## 5.9 Explaining the diffusion work of key actors for a voluntary sustainability standard within an organisational field

This chapter has examined the diffusion of ISO 20121 in the GC2018 interstitial issue field, and more specifically, the diffusion work employed by the field's key actors. Stamm's (2019) four modes of diffusion work provided the heuristic by which understanding was developed. These findings develop our understanding of diffusion work as a subset of institutional work and the overall process of institutionalisation. Lawrence et al. (2011) argued that "two issues are critical to understanding how the concept of work might usefully be connected to institutions – intentionality and effort" (p. 53).

### 5.9.1 Intentionality and Effort

The intentions of actors vary depending upon the dimension of agency that is most prevalent in settings where institutional work is taking place. The formation of the temporal boundary of the GC2018 field had distinct phases and is illustrated in Figure 5.2.



Figure 5.2 GC2018 Event Lifecycle (Queensland Government, 2019b)

The shift from 'strategic planning' to 'operational planning and delivery' also marked a shift in the dimension of agency of GOLDOC members from projective to practical-evaluative (Battalina & D'Aunno, 2009). Alluding to how agency and action in relation to GOLDOC members was affected, Respondent31 stated that:

The task is now getting fairly big. It's past the planning and strategic phase. They're now in operational delivery mode... The problem now is how do we facilitate a conversation to make sure that they're at least thinking about legacy opportunities? The closer you get to Games time, the more specialised the roles are, and the more

blinker they become. They're not really putting their heads up to have a look at the broader city, or the broader Games even to have a look at the opportunities.

Respondent12 details how the communication of sustainability matters became less of a priority for event managers closer to the event delivery phase:

I think that clearly mega-events need to focus on sustainability. They need to disseminate that information to a huge, huge number of stakeholders. I mean not just to their suppliers but their volunteers. It's a huge communication challenge and it's interesting because these large events don't exist to be sustainable ... Sustainability is not a number one priority. It's probably not even a number two, three, or four priority, or five. I just don't think it necessarily falls high on the list and the closer you get to the event, the further it falls down the list.

Thus, the majority of GOLDOC's diffusion work was identified as conceptual.

While GOLDOC was the most active diffuser of ISO 20121, its practical-evaluative agency led to an inability to engage in broad diffusion work. Also, there was no evidence found to suggest that industry associations had any significant role in the diffusion of ISO 20121; therefore, supporting Dickson and Arcodia's (2010) position that professional associations typically lack engagement in the promotion of sustainable event practices.

### ***5.9.2 Diffusion Work***

Stamm (2019) emphasised the importance of the type of diffusion work used by actors, stating that broad diffusion, "... prepares the ground for and facilitates the other three types of diffusion. Therefore, broad diffusion tends to precede and to be conditional for other types of diffusion" (p. 151). While this chapter has illustrated the importance of broad diffusion, Stamm may have overlooked the significance of key actors' position within the organisational field as a mechanism for diffusion. Within the current study, findings indicated that the CGF was not an active diffuser of ISO 20121 in comparison to other key actors. However, the requirement of a compliance standard has led to the institutionalisation of ISO 20121 as part of the institutional infrastructure of organising committees of the Commonwealth Games. While the CGF's bid requirements suggest an environmentally-focused approach to the implementation of a sustainable event management system for organising committees, Chapter Six details how this acted as a barrier to the diffusion of ISO 20121 within the GC2018 field beyond GOLDOC. Hinings et al. (2017) stated that the capacity to generate change may be related to individual subject positions occupied in a

field, and the findings presented in this chapter suggest that the prevailing institutional infrastructure may reinforce those positions. As diffusion work has may act as an antecedent to isomorphism, diffusion work needs to shift focus towards non-mega-event organisations.

### 5.10 Chapter Summary

This chapter analysed how key actors engaged in the diffusion of ISO 20121. The findings indicate that mega-events are confronted with isomorphic pressures to adopt ISO 20121. Table 5.1 summarises the diffusion work employed actors based on this view of diffusion work.

Table 5.1

Summary of Actors Engagement in Diffusion Work Types

<b>Key Actors</b>	<b>Type of Diffusion Work</b>			
	<i>Concrete</i>	<i>Broad</i>	<i>Selective</i>	<i>Conceptual</i>
CGF			X	X
GCCBC	X			
GOLDOC		X	X	X
Governments				X
Consultants	X	X	X	X
Universities	X	X	X	X

This chapter illustrates how the institutionalisation of sustainable event management may in fact as a barrier to the diffusion and subsequent institutionalisation of ISO 20121. As the focus of this chapter was on how ISO 20121 diffused or “flowed” through the GC2018 field, the emphasis of the next chapter is to examine the extent to which the standard became institutionalised, or “stuck.” To do so within the confines of this study, the researcher employs Rogers’ (2003) innovation-decision process to examine potential adopters’ perceptions of the standard within the Gold Coast events industry.

The following chapter, Chapter Six, is the final results and discussion chapter, and presents how potential adopters within the GC2018 perceived ISO 20121 through the diffusion work that they were exposed to.

## **Chapter Six: The Innovation-Decision Process (IDP) and Factors that Influence the Diffusion of ISO 20121**

### **6.1 Introduction**

Chapter Five focused on the diffusion work of key actors for the diffusion of ISO 20121. This chapter examines the effect if any, diffusion work had on the organisational adoption of ISO 20121 within the GC2018 field. Specifically, this chapter addresses the third research question: *How do perceptions of prospective adopters towards a management system standard affect adoption decisions?* To answer this question, the researcher examined the adoption of ISO 20121 through the actions and perceptions of organisational decision-makers towards the standard. The analytical strategy used to answer this research question drew upon Rogers' (2003) Innovation Decision Process (IDP) model, a subprocess of diffusion, that focuses on the attitudes and perceptions of individuals towards an innovation. The three aims of this chapter were to:

- (1) Establish the overall knowledge and adoption of ISO 20121 in the GC2018 organisational field;
- (2) Add to the dearth of academic literature focused on ISO 20121, and;
- (3) Establish the utility of the IDP model to evaluate the outcomes of diffusion work.

The first section of this chapter provides an overview of the IDP model, and how it was used in the study. Following this overview, a discussion of the institutional conditions relative to ISO 20121 is presented. The institutional conditions for diffusion are a vital factor in the diffusion process as adoption decisions are often the result of external pressures; indeed, Colyvas and Johnson (2011) contended that institutional conditions have been overlooked in institutional theory. Then, an analysis of prospective adopters' experience viewed through the IDP is presented. Subsequently, the enablers and barriers to the adoption of ISO 20121 that were identified through the IDP are discussed. A model is then proposed to address the barriers to ISO 20121 adoption. Finally, the chapter concludes with a summary of the findings.



## 6.2 The Innovation Decision Process (IDP) Model

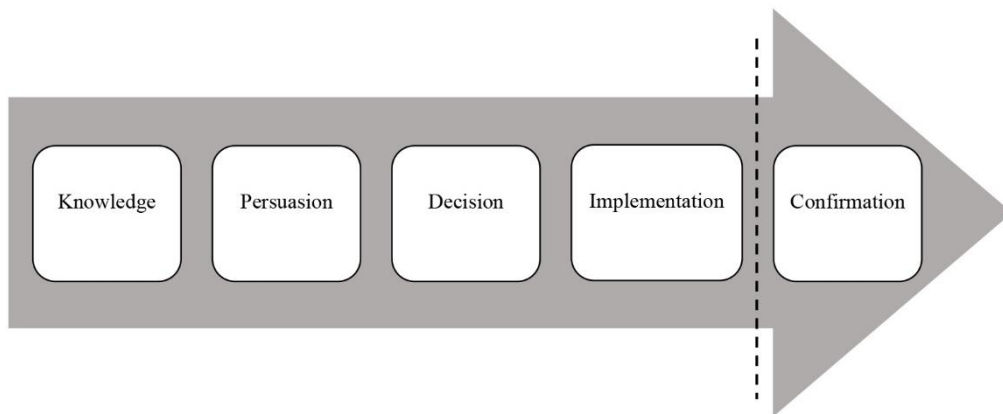
Rogers (2003) defined an innovation as, “an idea, practice, or object perceived as new by an individual or other unit of adoption” (p. 36). ISO 20121 is characterised by what Klewitz and Hansen (2014) term a “sustainability-oriented innovation,” as the standard reforms the processes and structures within an organisation towards the deliberate management of the economic, social, and environmental aspects of its event-related products and services. ISO 20121 meets Rogers’ definition of an innovation since it was published in 2012, six months after the establishment of GOLDOC, and required adoption by GOLDOC and other actors; therefore, potential adopters within this study can be characterised as early adopters of ISO 20121.

The IDP was used as an indicator in relation to the broader diffusion of ISO 20121 within the GC2018 field. According to Rogers (2003), the IDP is “an information-seeking and information-processing activity, where an individual is motivated to reduce uncertainty about the advantages and disadvantages of an innovation” (Rogers, 2003, p. 172). Diffusion as a stage within the institutionalisation process is an important, though understudied aspect of the change process (Colyvas & Jonsson, 2011; Stamm, 2019). Thus, the IDP provides a mechanism by which the researcher was able to evaluate the diffusion work carried out by key actors. This enabled the researcher to develop understanding around the relationship between diffusion work, diffusion and the pre-institutionalisation of ISO 20121. As illustrated in Figure 6.1, the IDP has five main stages: knowledge, persuasion, decision, implementation, and confirmation. However, the final stage of the IDP, confirmation, was not included in the study as analysis of the final stage extended beyond the scope of the study.

Primary data for this chapter were collected from semi-structured interviews with 17 potential adopters of ISO 20121. An interviewee was deemed a potential adopter of ISO 20121 if: (1) they worked at an organisation that could be ISO 20121 certified; (2) their organisation was directly involved with GC2018 as a supplier, venue, or Games Partner; and, (3) they were not a member of GOLDOC (refer to Chapter 5.3). In total, 17 interviewees met these requirements, from an initial pool of 33 candidates. Two of these 17 candidates were excluded from the IDP analysis because they lacked knowledge of the standard prior to their interviews and could not provide relevant information about their experience within the IDP for ISO 20121. Additional secondary data were gathered from other interviewees who, though not potential adopters, still had relevant viewpoints regarding enabling factors

and barriers to adoption. Finally, participant observations, organisational documents, and newspaper articles were also used to supplement the primary interview data.

An important consideration related to the timing of respondent interviews. Interviews were undertaken from September 2015 to November 2017. Thus, it was anticipated that respondents who interviewed later on would have experienced more stages of the IDP in relation to the standard. Another temporal consideration was the publication of ISO 20121 (June 2012) in comparison to participant interviews. The standard was identified to be in what Tolbert and Zucker (1996) deemed the pre-institutionalisation stage. As this stage is characterised as having few adopters with limited knowledge of the practise, participants were likely to have much less awareness and knowledge of the innovation in comparison to other more prominent ISO standards.



*Figure 6.1 Innovation-Decision Process (Adapted from Rogers, 2003, p. 170).*

### **6.3 Knowledge Stage**

While knowledge and persuasion are described as two distinct phases within the IDP, these two phases were commonly combined into single diffusion activities, such as GOLDOC's Sustainability Forums and the GCCC's Sustainable Events Working Group (SEWG). Within this study, the knowledge stage of the IDP commenced for individuals when they were first made aware of ISO 20121 and began to develop an understanding of how it functions. Three main themes were found within this first stage of the IDP: 1) situational factors; 2) acquaintance with ISO 20121; and, 3) comprehension of the standard.

### ***6.3.1 Situational Factors***

The main situational factor identified as pertinent to the adoption of ISO 20121 was the size of respondents' respective organisations. Of the 17 potential adopters, 15 either worked at an organisation, or within a specific department of an organisation that was identified as a small-to-medium enterprise (SME). Although the term is used worldwide, there is no universally accepted criteria or definition of what constitutes an SME. Since the best consensus of an SME is an organisation's total number of employees (Ayyagari, Beck, & Demirguc-Kunt, 2007), this study used the Australian Bureau of Statistics' (2019) classification of an SME, defined as a business that employs less than 250 individuals.

### ***6.3.2 Acquaintance with ISO 20121***

The respective sources by which the 15 respondents became acquainted with ISO 20121 are summarised in Table 6.1. Eight of the 15 respondents who stated that they were introduced to the standard through GOLDOC described four different communication channels: Annual Sustainability Forums, legacy committee meetings, online articles, and the Gold Coast City Council's (GCCC) SEWG. For instance, Respondent5 stated, "since our facility is involved with the Commonwealth Games, we've been invited to those annual Sustainability Forums. That's where I first heard of the ISO standard." Meanwhile, Respondent13 referred to her involvement with the GC2018 Legacy Committee as the manner by which she first heard about the standard, stating:

Being on the legacy committee, I've heard the ISO 20121 name being thrown around quite a bit. And just based off of conversation, I know it's closely tied to sustainability and the Games itself. But, I'm not familiar with the ISO 20121 beyond that.

Three respondents referred to the GCCC's SEWG as an initial source of ISO 20121 information. As Respondent15 stated, while SEWG was situated within the GCCC, members of GOLDOC's Sustainability Team initiated ISO 20121 discussion:

I was introduced to the standard through the city's waste management working group that I am on. Since that was launched, we've been lucky enough to have the guys from GOLDOC come in and talk to us about what we can learn from their experience with the Games.

Respondent23 also stated that she first learned about the standard through GOLDOC and went on to suggest that GOLDOC was the source of initial information on the standard for a majority of SEWG members. She explained that,

I didn't know about ISO 20121 until recently when I was asked to be a part of the Sustainable Events Working Group. We've learned a lot about sustainability and events through GOLDOC's involvement with the group. A lot of their discussion was around ISO 20121 and how it will help them deliver a sustainable Games. I'd say that's how most of the people, apart from the working group, heard of ISO 20121.

Table 6.1

*Source of respondent acquaintance with ISO 20121*

Number of Respondents (n=15)	Source	Sample Response
5	GOLDOC	"I first heard about the standard at last year's Sustainability Forum."
3	GOLDOC (via the GCCC SEWG)	"We've really just been introduced to the standard through GOLDOC."
3	Online multimedia	"I have come across that. Only in the sense that a couple of years ago, I was researching green events."
2	Sustainable Tourism Advisory Group	"EarthCheck actually approached us to see if we would like to participate in going through the [ISO 20121] certification process."
2	Experience with ISO standards	I only heard it because I worked in the IT industry before this and we did a lot of ISO work for compliance."

Although GOLDOC was the most commonly referenced source of information regarding the standard, a number of respondents recounted learning about the standard from other sources. For instance, Respondent17 initially read about ISO 20121 online: “I have come across that [ISO 20121] only in the sense that a couple of years ago, I was researching green events.” Respondent10 also read about the standard through an online source, and was the only respondent acquainted with the standard prior to its publication in 2012:

I've known about the document for probably six years. I came across it online through a media release that had to do with the London Olympics. So, I guess I've always known of it and I've sort of looked at it briefly.

Respondent26, a facility manager for a GC2018 competition venue, discussed how his previous job in the information technology industry required him to work with other ISO standards and how he recognised the ISO name in a GC2018 article:

I only heard of it [ISO 20121] because I worked in the IT industry before this and we did a lot of ISO work for compliance. When I saw it in an article somewhere, I immediately recognised the ISO name and I know that's the standard then that they're obviously engaging for ventures like the Commonwealth Games. I don't know exactly what the ISO 20121 standard requirement is, but I know it's a new standard they're using for the Games.

EarthCheck, a sustainable tourism advisory group (refer to Chapter 5), was described as another unique initial source of ISO 20121 information. As Respondent27 stated, “EarthCheck actually approached us to see if we would like to participate in going through the [ISO 20121] certification process.” It is noteworthy that the facility that Respondent27 and Respondent28 were employed at was the only facility not identified as an SME, with over 250 employees.

### ***6.3.3 Comprehension of ISO 20121***

The general purpose of the standard is to provide a framework for adopters to integrate sustainability within the culture of their organisation and, “... to consider the environmental, social, and economic impacts of every decision made” (Respondent3). Within the ISO 20121 (p.2) document itself, it states that the standard, “is applicable to all types and sizes of organizations” (p. v) and its implementation, “... provides an enduring,

balanced approach to economic activity, environmental responsibility and social progress” (p.2). However, interview data revealed that respondents commonly misunderstood ISO 20121; rather than a holistic sustainable event management system standard aimed at managing the triple bottom line (Theron & Prevett, 2015), respondents more often comprehended it as an environmental standard designed specifically for mega-events.

Eight of the 15 respondents believed that ISO 20121 was distinctly an *environmental* management system standard. For instance, Respondent10 discussed how the standard was not necessary for their organisation as they already had environmental initiatives in place:

Well, we already have our policy in place to be a bit more sustainable and look after the environment that we discuss with our suppliers. So, it gets at what they can do to help us reach our goals. There are plastic bottles obviously. There's fruit waste, saving on electricity; whatever that might be. Suppliers are a big thing obviously with our event sustainability policy.

Respondent10 was dubious as to the possibility of implementing ISO 20121 as it could not be incorporated into their budget:

The sustainability issues we've discussed at the early stages were things like solar power, water tanks, they're the types of issues that we've discussed. Some of the same things GOLDOC's already focusing on. Whether we can fit those in the budget though, is doubtful (Respondent 26).

Meanwhile, Respondent17 preferred to implement an online ecological footprint calculator, rather than adopting the standard:

I've looked into ES [environmental sustainability] tools like the ISO. I ended up using a tool online that calculates an event's ecological footprint. It's an event tool where you can click data and monitor greenhouse gas emissions. You monitor your energy, waste, transportation, and things like that.

This misconception of ISO 20121 as a purely environmental management system standard is not limited to respondents within this study, as the academic literature has also been divided. Table 6.2 provides examples of how the standard has been referenced within the academic literature.

Table 6.2

*Descriptions of ISO 20121 in academic literature*

Environmental Event Management System	Sustainable Event Management System
The latest developed and relevant ISO standard for ES [environmental sustainability] in the sport and recreation industry is ISO 20121 (Nguyen, 2018, p. 225).	ISO 20121 is not only about environmental or green issues ... ISO 20121 is a holistic standard ... (Theron & Prevett, 2015, p. 177).
This would seem to suggest that an opportunity exists to further encourage public events to engage with environmental benchmarking efforts such as the previously cited international standard for sustainable event management—ISO 20121 (Harris & Schlenker, 2018, p. 1069).	Using ISO 20121 at the same time will help users think about sustainability in a more holistic way, looking at their entire operations as it relates to events and striving to imbed this new way of working into the culture of the organization (Walker, 2012, p. 51).
They ultimately delivered the basis for ISO 20121 (ISO, 2012), an EMS [environmental management system] template designed specifically for mega-events (Lauermann, 2016).	The ISO 20121 Sustainable Events standard offers practical guidelines on managing events and controlling their social, economic, and environmental impacts (Cavagnaro, Postma, & de Brito, 2017, p. 301).

The ISO 20121(2012) website clearly articulates the standard as a holistic sustainability event management system standard, stating:

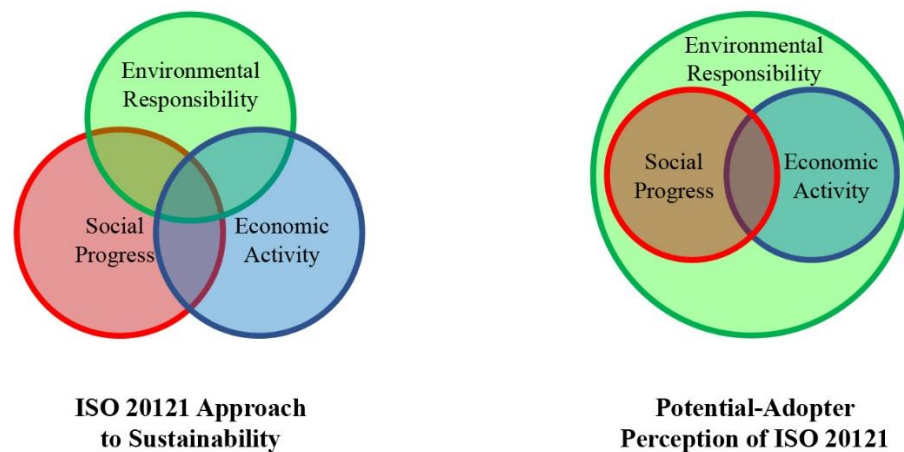
There is much confusion about what the term sustainability actually means. The important point to note is that sustainability is not just about being “green” and more environmentally responsible – it is more encompassing than that. In a nutshell, sustainability is about how an organisation continues to run its activities in a commercially successful way whilst contributing towards a stronger and more just society and reducing its impact on the environment. To achieve ISO 20121, an organisation will need to demonstrate that it has considered within its management system all key financial, economic, social and environmental issues relevant to its operations; focusing solely on environmental issues will not be sufficient (ISO, 2013, pp. ¶15-16).

The importance of this distinction between potential adopters' perceptions of ISO 20121 as a purely environmental standard versus a balanced sustainability standard is paramount because, as stated by ISO (2012), sustainability addresses in equal measure "economic activity, environmental responsibility and social progress" (p. 2). While environmental management systems (EMS) specifically focus on, "a formal system and database which integrates procedures and processes for the training of personnel, monitoring, summarizing, and reporting of specialized environmental performance information to internal and external stakeholders of the firm" (Sroufe, 2003, p. 426). Getz (2017) alluded to the danger of imbalanced perceptions of sustainability in the event context. As he stated, "meeting green standards does not ensure social responsibility, and indeed an overemphasis on social and environmental responsibility might weaken an event's economic viability" (Getz, 2017, p. 585). Reflecting this concern stemming from an imbalanced conception of sustainability standards, especially relating to the diffusion process of ISO 20121, is that the focus on environmental sustainability disserves the potential social and economic attributes of the standard. The Global Sustainable Events Summit (2016) report discussed this issue:

By focusing on the environmental impacts of an event, we are focusing on the most challenging pillar of sustainability for the event industry to demonstrate positive results with ... Obviously, the environmental impact of events should not be ignored but the industry should improve their ability to tell the story of the positive economic and social impacts of events as a way to provide context for and offset the environmental impacts of an event (p.6).

Figure 6.2 provides a visual representation of the differences between the approach to sustainability, as stated in ISO 20121 and how potential adopters within the GC2018 field perceived the standard.





*Figure 6.2* ISO 20121 approach to sustainability versus potential adopter perceptions of the standard

The second misconception among respondents was that ISO 20121 is only applicable to mega-events. For instance, Respondent26 stated, “I think its [ISO 20121] really only associated with big events like your Commonwealth and Olympic Games. I don’t think it would be something for us.” Respondent13 also discussed the same narrative: “Although we do run small events here at [name removed], they aren’t comparable to a Commonwealth Games.” The notion that the standard was not fit for their organisation was also described by Respondent17 who initially read about ISO 20121 online: “I remember coming across the ISO 20121, but it seemed too complicated for an organisation of our size.” This misconception was also evident in the participant observation data. For example, at GOLDOC’s 2016 Sustainability Forum, a GC2018 supplier stated, “Our company doesn’t stage events, so I don’t see how this standard would be applicable to us” (Field notes, March 12, 2016). However, the standard was designed to be, “...applicable to all types and sizes of organizations involved in the design and delivery of events” (ISO, 2012, p. v).

The data gathered in relation to the knowledge stage supports what Theron and Prevett (2015) described as a lack of understanding of ISO 20121 within the events sector. The misconceptions related to the potential adopters of ISO 20121, and its function as a holistic sustainability event management system. These misconceptions formed barriers, which ultimately impacted upon the standard’s adoption. Many potential adopters became acquainted with and developed their initial knowledge of ISO 20121 through GOLDOC’s

diffusion work in running annual Sustainability Forums. Leading up to the Games, GOLDOC was essentially a temporary organisation with approximately 1,800 employees (Queensland Government, 2019b), as compared to potential adopters that were permanent SMEs. It was, therefore, not surprising that this heterophilous nature of the relationship between GOLDOC and the majority of potential adopters resulted in a misalignment of sustainability priorities. Heterophily refers to, "... the degree to which two or more individuals who interact are different in certain attributes," and is, "...one of the more distinctive problems in the diffusion of innovations" (Rogers, 2003, p. 19).

The source of respondents' acquaintance with ISO 20121 emerged as a key factor in determining early rejection of the innovation. For instance, Respondent20 stated:

This is just my observation of the [annual Sustainability] Forums, but I think there is always a strong environmental sustainability focus there. I think that that's worth being aware of too, knowing that sustainability is broader than just the environment ... It's critical that all three aspects of sustainability are communicated if you're trying to get buy-in because events have different issues and expectations.

This comment from Respondent20 suggests that conceptual diffusion may actually have acted as a barrier to the adoption of ISO 20121, as the perception of the standard, when communicated through a heterophilous source, may not align with potential adopters. The relationship between GOLDOC and prospective adopters acted as a barrier to the diffusion of the standard due to the heterophilous relationship between these stakeholders. Within this study, GOLDOC represented the main source of acquaintance with ISO 20121, while respondents – the potential adopters – represented various SMEs within the local Gold Coast events sector. For a number of respondents, their only awareness of ISO 20121 was through GOLDOC. Thus, these respondents were quick to reject the innovation due to their perception of it being almost irrelevant for them, as an innovation purely for managing the environmental impacts of mega-events. This initial barrier to the adoption of ISO 20121 partly explains why Meegan Jones, an Australian event sustainability consultant and founder of the Sustainable Event Alliance, stated in an interview that, "...we aren't seeing the 'bread and butter' of the events industry embracing the most basic of sustainability principles," and went on to describe the industry's adoption of ISO 20121 as "...lacklustre" (Arena, 2016, ¶16).

These findings support Rogers' (2003) position that: "consideration of a new idea does not go beyond the knowledge stage function if an individual does not define the information to his or her situation, or if sufficient knowledge is not obtained to become adequately informed" (p. 174). While the researcher identified 17 prospective adopters of ISO 20121, two respondents were not even aware of the innovation, while six immediately rejected the standard outright. Thus, the three themes within this section were significant in understanding the stilted diffusion of the standard within the organisational field as only nine respondents entered the persuasion stage.

#### **6.4 Persuasion Stage**

In the persuasion stage, potential adopters assess whether an innovation is worthwhile to adopt. This stage is characterised by how potential adopters perceive certain characteristics of the focal innovation, in this case, ISO 20121, which may or may not differ from its actual characteristics. Rogers (2003) identified five perceived characteristics related to the diffusion of an innovation: relative advantage, compatibility, trialability, complexity, and observability. Potential adopters develop a positive or negative attitude about an innovation based on these core characteristics. For example, studies have identified cost savings as a significant advantage to the adoption of ISO management system standards (Theron & Prevett, 2015; Walker, 2012). Thus, to increase the chances of potential adopters being persuaded to adopt, Stamm (2019) stated that diffusion work carried out by actors needs to demonstrate Rogers' (2003) five perceived benefits of an innovation:

- (1) relative advantage – the superiority of the new standard compared to other standards and no standard adoption at all;
- (2) compatibility – the compatibility of the standard "with the existing values, past experiences, and needs of potential adopters" (Rogers, 2003, p. 15);
- (3) trialability – that the standard can be "tried out" on a limited basis without serious consequences;
- (4) ease of adoption (level of complexity) – that adoption of the new standard is not overly complex; and,
- (5) observability – the ability to observe how other adopters successfully use the new standard.

#### ***6.4.1 Relative Advantage***

The first and arguably most pervasive perceived characteristic associated with ISO 20121 is its relative advantage. This attribute is depicted by the degree to which an innovation is perceived as better than the idea it supersedes (Rogers, 2003). In comparison to earlier sustainability-oriented innovations aimed at encouraging sustainable event management (such as ASTM Environmentally Sustainable Event Standard [refer to Chapter 3.5.3]), within ISO 20121, "...sustainability is not a box-ticking exercise" (Respondent3). Respondent10 elaborated on this attribute of the standard:

I think that one of the issues within the events industry is that event planners never really had a process that they could follow. Those interested in implementing sustainable initiatives would just pick and choose what worked for them. Things like limiting plastic use, recycling, using solar energy, things like that. Everything before ISO 20121 took the checklist approach and, you know, the checklist approach is actually much harder. The checklist approach is basically one person saying, "here's ten things I've made up that everyone around the world has to try and meet." This [ISO 20121] approach is instead very much like, "let's create a culture that makes a difference."

While Respondent16 did not meet the criteria of a potential adopter within this study, her role as an event sustainability consultant and her belief in the relative advantage of the standard is noteworthy:

What has had value for us has been improving our approach to events to include sustainability in a systematic way. Before ISO came along in the events field, it was governed by a really clunky, complicated, time-intensive checklist process where planners were madly running around onsite, checking off, "are we doing this? Are we doing that?" We didn't have an issues- and objectives-based approach to sustainability (Respondent 16).

Furthermore, Respondent29 discussed that the most significant benefit from implementation of the standard was related to incorporating sustainability into day-to-day event management activities:

Being someone who has used the standard, I think the most important aspect of it is from the event management point of view. I really appreciated all of the communications, vertically or horizontally, all these stakeholder engagement

meetings, all the definitions of your goals and how you're going to pursue them, and these parts of reporting that are a part of ISO. So, if you have a sustainability issue, what's the procedure? A, B, and C are all included in the standard. So that is really, really useful. And it's really current with the event day-to-day, because in the event everything happens so fast that literally the ISO could reflect this dynamism of the event organisation itself. So dealing with the issues that reflect what event managers' face day-to-day is really the part that makes the ISO unique

Potential adopters also depicted ISO as a credible organisation, stating that, "...the ISO name carries weight" (Respondent1). Similarly, Respondent28 suggested that, "having the ISO certification attached to the [name removed] certainly doesn't hurt." ISO management systems standards, most notably ISO 9001 and ISO 14001 are ubiquitous, as they have been adopted by over 1.5 million organisations globally (ISO, 2016). Generally, ISO standards are considered more legitimate within the academic community in comparison to other standard bodies, as ISO management system standards represent a distinct phenomenon with third-party verification (Castka & Corbett, 2015). However, the legitimacy of the certification process and the overall contribution to increased organisational performance have been questioned (Boiral, 2007; Castka & Corbett, 2015).

Participant observation data also revealed another form of the standard's perceived relative advantage in relation to increasing the perceived legitimacy of potential suppliers' efforts in securing contracts with GOLDOC. For example, one individual stated, "If it's something that GOLDOC is looking for and will help us get on board with the Games, then it's definitely something we will look into" (Field Notes, March 2016). In a similar vein, another supplier stated, "ever since they [GOLDOC] discussed their approach to sustainability at their forum last year [2015], I've been looking into it and discussing it with our team."

#### ***6.4.2 Compatibility***

The compatibility of ISO 20121 was dependent upon how the standard aligned with respondents' "...existing values, past experiences, and needs" (Rogers, 2003, p. 15). Experience with previous compliance was indicated as an important enabler: "So, ISO 20121 sits aligned with our EarthCheck compliance ... We only had to tweak a few items to ensure compliance with ISO 20121. So, it made sense for us to push forward on that"

(Respondent27). Halila (2007) described the integration of ISO standards with existing management systems and certifications as the most pertinent indicator of compatibility. As most respondents did not have previous experience with either, there was a low degree of compatibility evident among respondents.

In relation to existing values and needs, respondents perceived sustainability as an important issue within their respective organisations. However, there was doubt among some respondents as to whether or not event sustainability issues were important to the GCCC. Respondent23 discussed this in relation to recycling at the Gold Coast 600, the city's annual motor racing event:

My argument is that in New South Wales, Victoria, and South Australia, they probably already have a lot of these mandatory rules for these events coming in. It's not new. It's not that scary. I know at the GC 600 they've been thinking about recycling for a while, but they don't have the know-how internally and they don't have the person who's really passionate about it so it's like, "Oh, next year. Oh, next year." Whereas, if it was a *requirement*, they'd get their shit sorted and it would happen.

Respondent22 concurred and elaborated on this by discussing what he perceived as the GCCC's lacklustre approach to sustainability in relation to the approach taken by another nearby local city, the Sunshine Coast: "I don't think sustainability is a main priority within council. If they would take sustainability half as seriously as the Sunshine Coast does, we would be in much better shape."

#### **6.4.3 Trialability**

Trialability refers to the degree to which potential adopters can engage in experimentation with a particular innovation. In the case of this research, this attribute is the most difficult for diffusion actors to overcome as the standard involves many interconnected activities, performed by numerous staff members within an organisation. However, a prominent example of trialability was the involvement of prospective adopters who participated in GOLDOC's annual Sustainability Forums, as stakeholder engagement is a critical component of ISO 20121. Respondents discussed the value of the Forums in identifying GOLDOC's sustainability priorities:

From my involvement in GOLDOC going for that ISO process so far, the standout component is the consultation element of it and really trying to create a bit of a movement around all those sustainability components that they have identified, and for them to use those sustainability forums to really drive where their priorities are. There is always going to be that corporate and political overlay, but it seems to me that that's really a driving force with that standard; that it's really quite consultative based and it's not about someone just in a room documenting and implementing something nice, so it's important without more widespread consultation (Respondent20).

Respondent22 stated that his organisation planned on incorporating some of the activities from the Sustainability Forums into their meetings: "Yeah, you know I've been along to a few of the Sustainability Forums that they've held and there's been a real diverse crowd, which is wonderful. We've actually tried bringing in some of those activities from the forums into our meetings." The activities Respondent22's statement was referring to such as the SWOT analysis are detailed in *section 5.5.3*.

#### ***6.4.4 Ease of adoption (level of complexity)***

Complexity refers to the degree to which an innovation is difficult to comprehend, as adopters tend to favour simplicity when deciding whether or not to adopt an innovation (Rogers, 2003). Respondents frequently discussed the complexity of the standard, as well as the associated intensiveness of time required to implement ISO 20121 successfully. For instance, Respondent26 discussed a lack of time and more pertinent objectives as taking greater priority in the lead up to get Games ready. As he explained:

I've previously engaged a business consultant to help with our 3-year business strategy. So, I know he would be the go-to guy to for this [ISO 20121]. But, the detail of it, I just can't do it! I know how intensive these ISO standards can be because of my previous job. The Games are next year and we're in the middle of renovations.

Respondent10 discussed the complexity of the ISO 20121 document itself. Specifically, he described how the standard was not written for the average event manager:

I'm basically working through the document on my own since we're a small organisation. I've gone through most of it and there's stuff we already do and other

more common sense things. But, most of it is really difficult to digest. I've tried to work what I can from the document into our policy, but there's a lot that seems way more complicated than it needs to be. If they want event managers to use this, they should have written it in a language we can work through (Respondent 10).

Another consideration within complexity is the time it takes to successfully implement the standard:

The timeline it takes to adopt is not weeks or even months ... It's years. For us, the journey that led to ISO 20121 began three years ago. Initially, we did not consider the time that the tasks related to the process actually take. That was a big mistake (Respondent 16).

Previous research has identified the complexity of the implementation process for ISO management system standards as a significant barrier to their adoption, especially among SMEs (Cassells et al., 2011; Halila, 2007; Hillary, 2006). However, the creation of networks and how-to knowledge from professional associations have the potential to significantly reduce the level of standard complexity for SME adoption (Halila, 2007). A model to aid the diffusion of ISO 20121 is detailed at the end of this chapter.

#### ***6.4.5 Observability***

The ability for adopters to view the innovation prior to adoption significantly reduces uncertainty leading up to the decision stage (Rogers, 2003). In the case of ISO 20121, the management system is unique to the adopting organisation as it was designed to be "... applicable to all types and sizes of organizations involved in the design and delivery of events and accommodates diverse geographical, cultural and social conditions" (ISO, 2012, p.v). While this was described as a relative advantage, it also decreased the ability of respondents to observe its value in relation to their organisation. The only observable user that respondents could use as a reference point was GOLDOC, through the various media previously described. For instance, Respondent 5 stated that, "other than GOLDOC, I don't know of anyone else who's used the standard here on the Gold Coast." However, as explained in the first two stages of the IDP, the heterophilous relationship between GOLDOC and potential adopters led to a number of misconceptions of the overall role and purpose of ISO 20121 – rather than a holistic sustainability standard that could be adopted by any organisation involved in event production, it was perceived by many as an



environmentally-focused standard for mega-events. Another barrier to observability was the inability of potential adopters to communicate with GOLDOC. For instance, at GOLDOC's 2016 Sustainability Forum, local suppliers who were still in the procurement process expressed their frustration over GOLDOC's lack of communication. Thus, it is critical for diffusion actors to provide organisations, especially SMEs, with demonstrations of the potential benefits of the focal innovation, or standard, in this case, to increase its observability factor.

### **6.5 Decision Stage**

The decision stage of the IDP is when potential adopters engage in a decision to either adopt or reject an innovation based on their knowledge and perception of it. Rogers (2003) posits four types of decisions: active rejection, passive rejection, full adoption, and re-invention.

Full rejection consists of consideration of the innovation based on adequate knowledge about its attributes but choosing not to adopt. Only three respondents acknowledged rejecting ISO 20121 based on at least a basic level of understanding of its characteristics. As an indicative response, Respondent1 stated, "I did look into that standard and the GRI index. I think those are really useful tools, but their guidelines are more for an event organiser and not really applicable to us."

An adopter passively rejects an innovation when they only possess limited knowledge about the innovation and, as a result, never really seriously consider its adoption. Nine respondents were identified as what Rogers (2003) deemed "passive adopters," while six based their decision to reject adoption on significant misconceptions about the standard, perceiving it purely as an environmentally-focused standard for mega-events.

Full adoption is the third category of the decision stage and is attributed to individuals that make full use of the standard. Only two of the 17 respondents, who represented one organisation, were full adopters of the standard as their organisation achieved second-party certification in accordance to ISO 20121. Interestingly, these respondents represented the only other non-SME within the pool of respondents.

The concept of re-invention, the fourth category of the decision stage, is of particular importance to this study. Reinvention is attributed to an innovation that, "...is changed or modified by a user in the process of adoption and implementation" (Rogers, 2003, p. 17). ISO 20121 was described as a complex innovation with many "...moving parts" (Respondent3). The three respondents in this category reported adopting the standard in

various modified ways; these are described in the ensuing implementation stage, specifically in Section 6.6.1.

## **6.6 Implementation**

The only account of full adoption of ISO 20121 provided by respondents involved the Gold Coast Convention and Exhibition Centre (GCCEC); a GC2018 venue that hosted basketball and netball events and was also the media centre for the Games. The GCCEC had a previously established partnership with EarthCheck, an international certification and advisory group for the tourism industry. EarthCheck became formally aligned with the GCCEC in 2008 to help establish the venue as a world-leading sustainable meetings and events centre. Indeed, the GCCEC was the first convention centre worldwide to achieve EarthCheck Gold Certification in 2013. In 2014, EarthCheck released the Responsible Meetings and Events Standard, which was aligned to ISO 20121. EarthCheck persuaded the Sustainability Coordinator at the GCCEC that pursuing ISO 20121 accreditation would help establish the facility as a sustainability champion:

EarthCheck actually approached us and asked if we would like to participate in going through the ISO 20121 certification. They told us that it was “progressive” and “up and coming” because it is fairly new in the meetings and events sector and ISO standards in general are prominent (Respondent28).

Upon moving forward with ISO 20121 certification, it was evident that GCCEC’s previous involvement in the EarthCheck program was highly compatible with the standard and resulted in low complexity in adopting it:

We then spoke about it at our following Green Team meeting and decided as a group that it would be a good idea to push forward as just another level of accreditation that's more focused on our industry and we went from there ... We only had to tweak a few items to ensure compliance with ISO 20121 as it sits aligned with our EarthCheck compliance. The EarthCheck was a bit more rigorous of a process for us. With pretty much everything in place, it made sense for us to push forward on that since the [ISO 20121] standard aligns with our industry. (Respondent 28).

Another respondent explained that,

We've actually already developed a green events guide, even prior to this [ISO 20121] standard coming out. The guide is there to help people along their

sustainability journey at the centre and with their event. So, the ISO 20121 process was more of a formalisation of everything (Respondent27).

As Respondent28 alluded to, ISO 20121 was a more specific accreditation for the GCCEC as it is a meeting and events facility, whereas EarthCheck focuses on the wider travel and tourism industry. The EarthCheck program adopted by GCCEC involved six steps that were comparable to ISO's Plan-Do-Check-Act approach: policy, benchmarking, compliance, approach, performance, and communication. The GCCEC was required to demonstrate its sustainability performance by providing data from various sources such as meter readings and electricity bills that were then assessed against 10 EarthCheck key performance areas. This intensive outcome-based approach of EarthCheck's standard explained why Respondent28 described it as a more rigorous process than ISO 20121. Earlier implementation of the more demanding EarthCheck program made the decision to adopt ISO 20121 easier for the GCCEC.

#### ***6.6.1 Reinvention***

Three respondents described the implementation of various elements of ISO 20121 within the GCCC based on GOLDOC's nine sustainability priorities. This form of adoption constitutes re-invention as only parts of the standard are integrated into the GCCC's sustainability policy. The collaboration between GOLDOC's sustainability team and the GCCC led to the creation of the Sustainable Events Working Group (SEWG), which, "...was formed in May 2016 with the purpose of collaborating and advocating for opportunities to maximize sustainable management practices at Gold Coast Events" (GOLDOC, 2018, p. 50). The working group was created out of the GCCC's identification of the need to produce more sustainable events, particularly in the area of waste management. The GCCC also wanted to capitalise on the opportunity to transfer knowledge from GOLDOC's sustainability team and implement it for future events staged in the city. Thus, the group was created within the Waste Department of the GCCC. Upon its collaboration with GOLDOC, the group expanded its view on sustainable events beyond the initial focus on waste into areas that aligned with GOLDOC's sustainability priorities that were developed through ISO 20121:

A lot of the discussion has been around the ISO 20121 and how they're incorporating that into the Games. The one thing I think that we're going to need to be aware of is

that there will be some learnings out of that. We won't be able to replicate their model as they've ingrained that into planning from the very top. It's just not applicable to 75% of those smaller or medium events here on the Coast. It'll be about picking out what areas we actually already cover within City Council that their model can actually have an impact on. Certainly, the Gold Coast 600s or the Gold Coast Marathons would be events that could benefit from GOLDOC's model. I think to get any actual legacy that sticks around the ISO, it will be about taking components of it so it's in bite-sized pieces that can actually be digested by 75% of organisers here on the Coast (Respondent15).

In 2018, SEWG was provided a budget of AUD 50, 000 to create a sustainable event guide for the Gold Coast. The guide is expected to be released in late 2019. Figure 6.3 provides a summary of respondents' experience with ISO 20121 through the IDP.

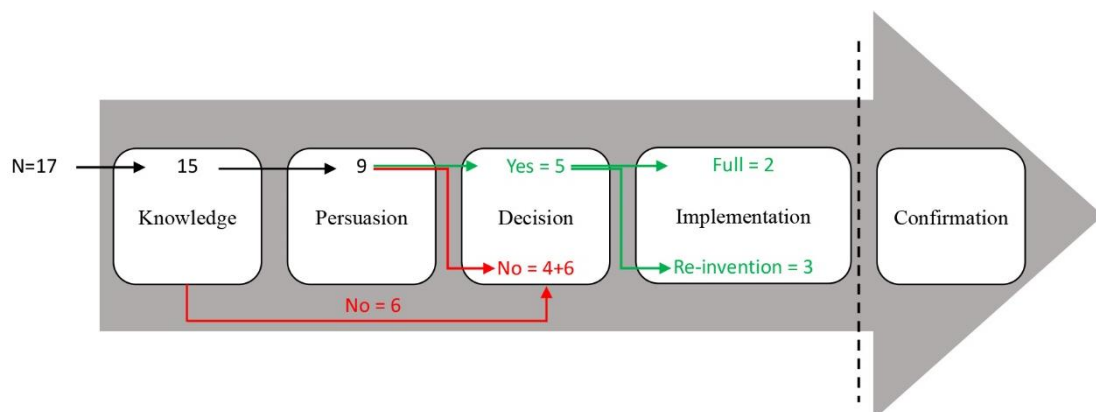


Figure 6.3 Summary of potential adopters' experience with ISO 20121 through the IDP

## 6.7 Summary of Findings

In their study on the diffusion of pro-environmental stadium design, Kellison and Hong (2015) found that early adopters prioritised relative advantage and compatibility over complexity, lack of trialability and observability. Within the current study, it was evident that adopters viewed the complexity, lack of observability, and compatibility of ISO 20121 as barriers to adoption, despite the standard's perceived relative advantage. The current study was characterised by numerous cases of innovation rejection, which seemingly contradicts Kellison and Hong's findings. However, this is not surprising considering that Kellison and Hong's study focused on, "... cases of successful implementation of

environmental sustainability” (Kellison & Hong, 2015, p. 18). Thus, despite overall positive perceptions of the standard’s relative advantage, ultimately, low levels of observability and trialability led to high levels of perceived complexity. This combination of factors resulted in ineffective diffusion of ISO 20121.

Although 17 of the 32 respondents of this study were identified as potential adopters of ISO 20121, only two respondents fully-adopted the standard. These respondents represented one organisation within the GC2018 field. Thus, the diffusion of ISO 20121 through the GC2018 field did not subsequently lead to widespread adoption of the standard within the Gold Coast events industry organisational field, as illustrated in Figure 6.4.

The most significant barrier to the diffusion of ISO 20121 was adopters’ perception of the standard as an environmentally-focused management system intended for mega-events. This misconception was due to actors developing their knowledge of the standard from GOLDOC. Thus, a majority of the potential adopters did not develop a comprehensive understanding of the standard to enter the persuasion stage. Getz (2019) conceived “...events to be individually and collectively *agents of change* – not mere vehicles for social marketing campaigns, not just demonstration projects with and educational mandate, but the very media of change” (p. s19). For this to be realised within the context of mega-events, a collaborative approach is required.

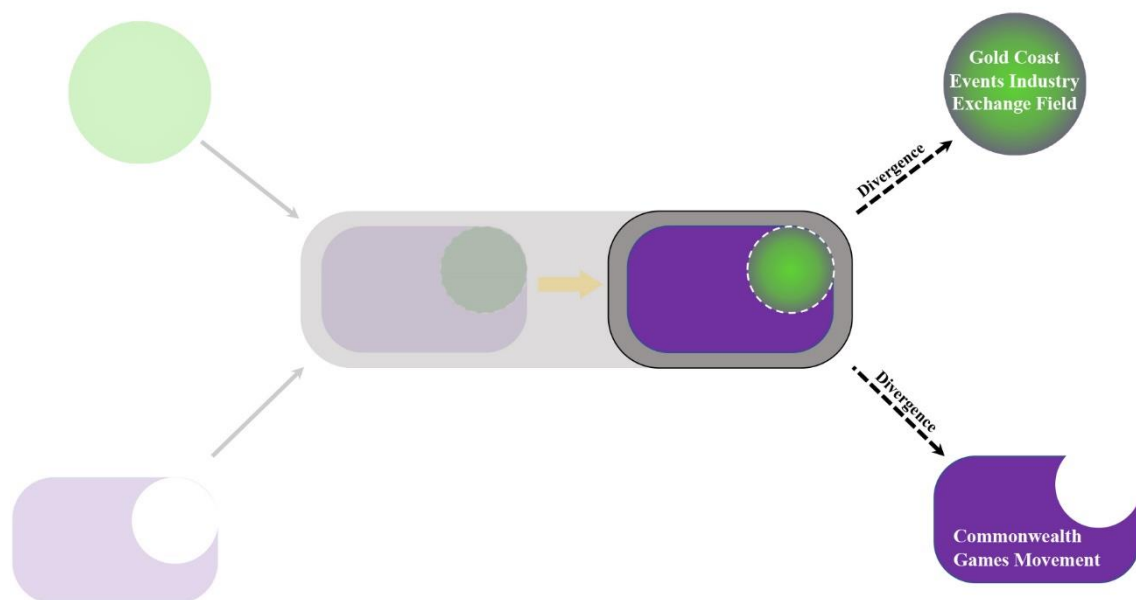


Figure 6.4 ISO 20121 diffusion failure

### ***6.7.1 Coordinating Diffusion Work for the Adoption of ISO 20121 in an Event Organisational Field***

The research question guiding this chapter looked to examine how perceptions of potential adopters towards ISO 20121 affect their adoption decision. A key finding in the previous section was that, despite the prevalence of SMEs in the GC2018 field, diffusion of the standard was ineffective to the point that the majority did not adopt ISO 20121. The data demonstrated that this lack of adoption was a function of passive rejection signalling that potential adopters made the decision to reject based on inadequate comprehension of the standard. This finding is significant because local small business operators constitute major stakeholders in any major or minor sport event network (Kirby, Duignan, & McGillivray, 2018). In light of these findings, and highlighting the enablers and barriers to diffusion that the IDP framework illuminated, a model is now proposed to depict how ISO 20121 can be strategically diffused to specifically target adoption by SMEs. The main purpose of a network approach is to eliminate the barriers to SME adoption that were identified in this chapter; most notably, the lack of a comprehensive understanding of ISO 20121 as a process-based sustainable event management system. Respondent9 discussed how potential adopters should be provided adequate information about the standard to enable managers the ability to make informed decisions regarding adoption or rejection:

I think every facility that's going to be involved, whether it be competition or training, should at least be aware of those standards in some form and look at utilising that. If we really want to use the Commonwealth Games to separate us from other cities, this is the type of thing that we need to look into more.

The notion of a network approach is not conceptually new, as previous models have been developed and empirically examined, such as the Hackerfors Model for ISO 14001 certification (Ammeberg, Wik, & Hjelm, 2001; Halila, 2007; Hillary, 2006). A network approach requires cooperation between SME adopters, larger organisations, and/or other actors, such as consultants, to implement a standard to address barriers associated with SME adoption (Hillary, 2006). These networks can generally be categorised into vertical or horizontal networks. Horizontal networks, such as the Hackefors Model, originated in Sweden in 1997 and involved the co-operation among local SMEs to establish a joint environmental management system in accordance with ISO 14001 (Hillary, 2006).

While the current studies draw from some of the fundamental principles of Halila's (2007) network approach based on the IDP, there are a number of distinctions presented in the current study's network approach. The most notable difference is the strategic use of a mega-event, such as the Commonwealth Games, to connect participants within the vertical network. The ISO 20121 network approach aligns with a vertical network as it is not coordinated by the SMEs themselves, but the key diffusion actors such as those described in the previous two chapters. Another important distinction is its focus on ISO 20121 adoption as opposed to ISO 14001 certification. While the application of the network approach targeting different standards is apparent, more important is the emphasis on adoption and not certification. The ISO 20121 network approach focuses on the fact that third-party certification, although possible, is not feasible due to the significant costs associated with certification in Australia, particularly in the context of SMEs.

Five important requirements for the ISO 20121 network approach are that:

- (1) The network aligns with a mega-event;
- (2) The SMEs are a part of the host community event industry;
- (3) Participation in the network is optional;
- (4) Key actor groups coordinate the network; and,
- (5) The network focuses on broad and concrete diffusion work.

*(1) The network aligns with a mega-event*

The importance of the network's alignment with the mega-event is to strategically use the interstitial field (as described in Chapter Four) as a means to diffuse ISO 20121. For instance, Respondent23 discussed how the prospect of staging GC2018 afforded opportunities for sustainability initiatives that may not have otherwise existed:

It's just so easy to pin a sustainability project on the Commonwealth Games to give it a bit of strength ... It's really hard to sell an idea, especially within Council. They are very risk averse and it has to be of some benefit to them. So, I have found it a lot easier to try and convince people that we should try something or at least look into something because the Commonwealth Games are coming up.

*(2) The SMEs are a part of the host community event industry*

The focus on the local events industry builds on Getz's (2017) conceptualisation of an action plan for attaining sustainable event cities:

The “policy fields” begin with typical greening actions for which ample advice is available, then proceed to a range of concerns that considerably expand the sustainability discourse for events. This added complexity will require many new partnerships and will necessitate collaborative action within the events sector. Designating some events as demonstration projects might get the process started, and it will ultimately be necessary to require portfolio managers (perhaps starting with tourism) to formulate a strategy that encompasses all these action areas. Each city or destination will undoubtedly find that it takes a somewhat different path, with varying priorities. When one considers the enormity of the challenge, this action plan might appear to be impractical. However, it can be argued that the greening of individual events—as in conformity to standards—is a good starting point and will lead to broader considerations (p. 587).

*(3) Participation in the network is optional*

ISO 20121 considers all of the 16 items in the action plan for sustainable event cities. Furthermore, the network approach can be used as a catalyst to strategically align a city’s event industry towards becoming a sustainable event city.

Optional participation in the network is imperative to the strategic use of diffusion work in this model. The previous chapter discussed how diffusion work can be used as a catalyst for isomorphic pressure. However, forcing participation in the network may lead to an institutionalisation process with a low level of stability (Lawrence, 2001). Within the proposed model, it is envisaged that network participation could be incentivised by event organising committees favouring suppliers compliant with ISO 20121. GOLDOC’s communication of preference for suppliers with management system standards in place, such as ISO 20121, was only not well-communicated to suppliers as it was passively mentioned in their Sustainability Sourcing Code. Furthermore, this competitive advantage when bidding for event contracts will spark institutional pressures that result in isomorphic pressures without formal mandates that require certification. Respondent14 alluded to the potential of this approach:

I did a quite comprehensive implementation of ISO 20121 for an Australian supplier to the Commonwealth Games. They were doing it because they were going for a



major tender. They were highly motivated to implement ISO 20121, so that they could have that as a part of their competitive advantage (Respondent14).

In the case of GC2018, while GOLDOC did prefer suppliers that were ISO 20121 compliant, the data indicate that some of the tenders were not released until very close to Games time, leaving limited time for network participants to gain an understanding of ISO 20121, let alone implement and demonstrate compliance. Therefore, this preferred supplier approach is highly dependent upon the competitive advantage being communicated by event organisers in a timely manner during the initiation of the ISO 20121 network approach.

#### *(4) Key actor groups coordinate the network*

The fourth requirement relates to network coordination by key diffusion actors. While a network approach sounds like an onerous undertaking, much of the activities were already taking place in the lead up to GC2018. For example, in 2014 the Queensland State Government and GOLDOC held multiple *GC2018 Supplier Information Sessions* in which potential suppliers were provided with an opportunity to seek information regarding the tendering process for GC2018 contracts; thereby, providing an opportunity to recruit potential participants in the ISO 20121 network. Furthermore, GOLDOC contracted a sustainability consultant in 2014 to lead the ISO 20121 implementation process for the organisation who also worked with the London 2012 Olympic Games and the Glasgow 2014 Olympics Games. As described in the previous chapter, the consultant attempted to engage local suppliers in participating in ISO 20121 workshops. The involvement of event sustainability consultants in central co-ordination roles is imperative as consultants are experts in interpreting standards for organisational adoption (Brès & Gond, 2014). Thus, the presence of professional event sustainability consultants within the field allows for their involvement in the network. Furthermore, this network approach allows for the diffusion work of organising committees, such as GOLDOC, to be much more effective as their role can be described as a mentor. Rather than leading the diffusion work, which led to potential adopters' misinterpretation of the standard, organising committees are a part of the adoption process; thereby, allowing for the building of networks with the local SMEs within the ISO 20121 network.

*(5) The network focuses on broad and concrete diffusion work*

Finally, the fifth requirement distinguishes between two types of diffusion work: broad and concrete. Stamm (2019) identified broad diffusion as an antecedent to the other three types of diffusion work detailed in the previous chapter. As demonstrated in Chapter Five, broad diffusion was lacklustre in the case of GC2018. So in an ideal diffusion scenario, SME participants develop a base level of knowledge about the standard, thus enabling pathways to the persuasion stage. As SMEs develop an adequate understanding of ISO 20121, concrete diffusion work aimed at persuading full implementation of the standard will be more effective following a decision to begin implementation of the standard. The ISO 20121 SME network approach is illustrated Figure 6.5.

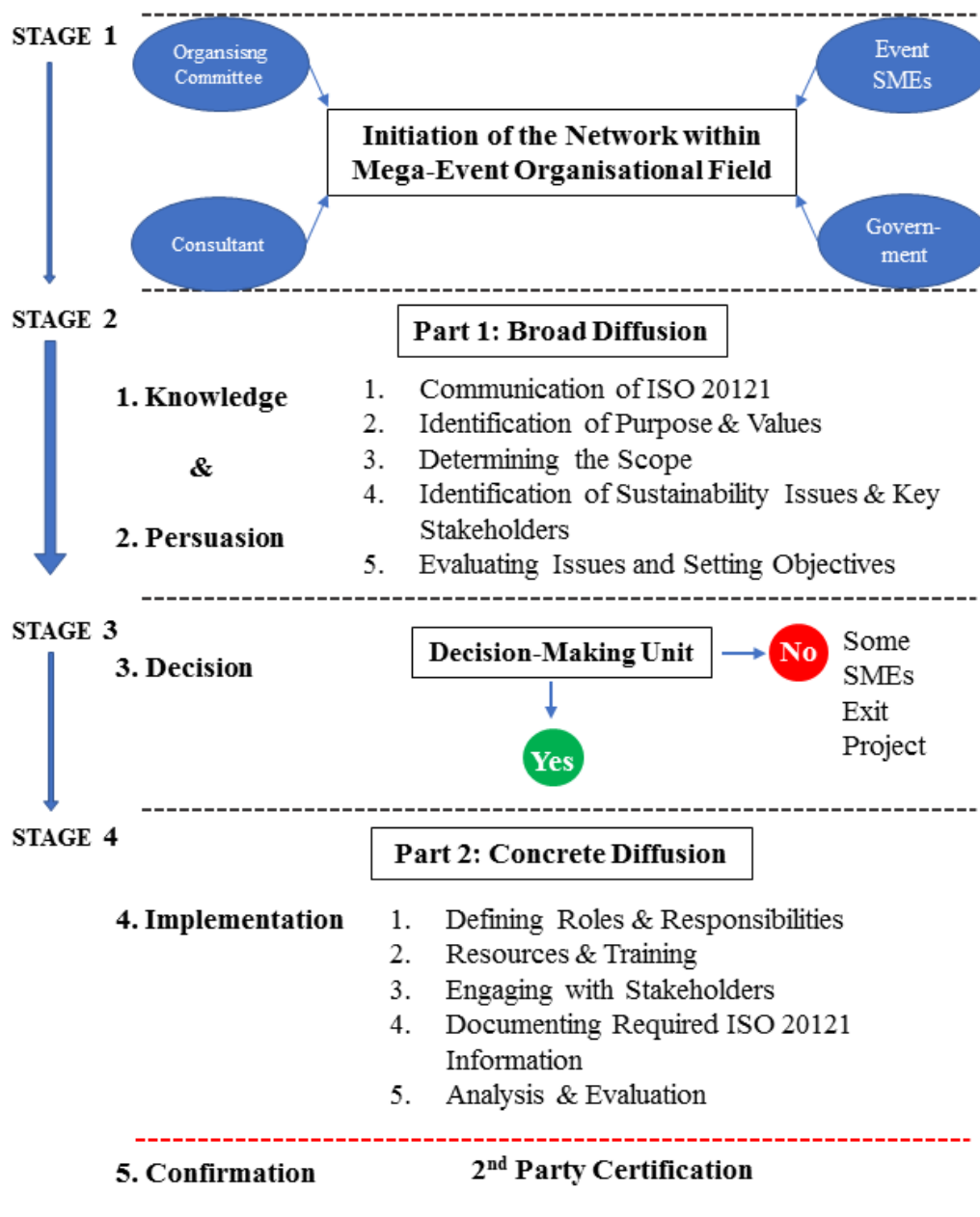


Figure 6.5 Network Approach for ISO 20121 SME Adoption

### Stage 1: Initiating the ISO 20121 Network

The initiation of the network includes three main tasks to be coordinated by key diffusion actors such as event organisers or local government actors: recruitment of SMEs, the coordination of roles and responsibilities for key actors, and decision on the timing of

the network in relation to the event. Respondent21 discussed GCCC's approach to the recruitment of local businesses in its ISO 9001 network:

Originally, we had about 200-odd businesses we have worked within supply chain development in construction. Through that, about 60 of those went through and did just an information workshop on ISO 9000; the management principles and how they could implement that into their business. A lot of them just started that and started the implementation process. We then moved forward and took 15 businesses through ISO 9000 training, which we paid for, which was \$2,500 per head. We think we probably will have 15 businesses go through and do an audit by November, December, this year to be accredited early next year.

Integrating the ISO 20121 network with the event subsequently leads to less effort on recruiting participants as potential suppliers will likely seek opportunities to engage with event-related activities in an effort to develop a competitive advantage for resources. Aside from the delivery of content within the network, another important decision refers to funding the network. For instance, a sustainability consultant may be contracted to carry out the network in collaboration with the organising committee, while funding may come from the government or the sport governing body. One of the distinct advantages of coordinating the diffusion activity is the cost reductions for SMEs through joint services and consultancy. Respondent3 stated that the cost to run ISO 20121 on the Gold Coast for suppliers was "around \$5000 per company."

A key decision during the initiation of the ISO 20121 network is timing in relation to the event. Not only is the implementation of the standard a time-consuming process, but also its effectiveness is diminished when the event enters the operational phase (approximately two years prior to the Games for GC2018). While this was discussed in the previous chapter from the perspective of key actors, Respondent3 reiterates this point from the adopter's perspective: "I now think we're running out of time any month now and we've run out of time because it's only two years until the event and if you're going to be the conference centre or any of the other partners implementing it you need to be in action now." Thus, implementation of the network should begin at least three to four years prior to the event.

## **Stage 2: Broad Diffusion of ISO 20121 Within the Network**

The primary goal during Stage 2 is to communicate the attributes and applicability of ISO 20121 in relation to SME adoption. This stage provides key actors with an opportunity to address the barriers regarding the misconceptions of the standard that were apparent as environmentally-focused and applicable to mega-events. Once potential adopters attain adequate knowledge of the standard, key actors can begin to focus their diffusion work on persuading adoption. To do so, key actors should identify aspects of ISO 20121 that are common to all members of the network and begin to implement the early steps of the standard (e.g. determining the scope of the sustainability management system). While trialability has been described as “the most difficult of Rogers; five attributes to apply when dealing with an innovation such as an EMS” (Halila, 2007, p.172), Stage 2 provides a distinct opportunity for potential adopters to engage with an experimentation of the standard. For example, since the potential adopters exist within the same local events exchange field, the network will likely share common sustainability issues and stakeholders; thereby, presenting an opportunity to collectively identify common sustainability issues and stakeholders within the local community.

## **Stage 3: Decision to Move into the Implementation Phase**

The distinct line between broad diffusion work and concrete diffusion work within this network is the decision SMEs make by moving into the implementation phase. The difference between being introduced to the standard and committing to implementing the standard is significant; therefore, numerous SMEs will likely exit the network at this point. For instance, the GCCC’s ISO 9001 network saw 15 organisations move into this phase from 60 potential adopters.

## **Stage 4: Concrete Diffusion of ISO 20121 within the Network**

This stage focuses on the implementation of the standard with actors taking on a more consultancy-based role. During this phase, the network changes in character, becoming more specific to the needs of individual SMEs in the network. The responsibility for further progress on the implementation of ISO 20121 devolves on the adopters as opposed to the network; therefore, much of the work is done outside of the network. For example, the training of staff requires ensuring that staff are capable of carrying out their activities related to the successful adoption of the standard. Once the network is completed adopters can decide to continue with the second-party and third-party certification processes as the focus

of this network is on maximising strategic diffusion work of key actors to affect the adoption of the standard, not necessarily certification.

## **6.8 Chapter Summary**

Overall, this chapter found slow uptake of ISO 20121 in the GC2018 field. The key actors did not attend to the five perceived innovation characteristics within the IDP due to the utilisation of ineffective communication channels that relied on mainly selective and conceptual diffusion. Based on accounts from the first three stages of the IDP, it was evident that few diffusion actors had adequately disseminated information to potential adopters about ISO 20121. Furthermore, evidence suggests that not all diffusion work leads to a positive association with the standard. In fact, this study found that selective and conceptual diffusion acted, in some ways, as a barrier to the adoption of ISO 20121. Specifically, this chapter illustrates how GOLDOC's environmentally-focused interpretation of the standard acted as a barrier to its adoption among respondents. Furthermore, this chapter provides a network approach to ISO 2021 based on the study's findings. The next chapter will now present the conclusion of this thesis.



## **Chapter Seven: Conclusion**

### **7.1 Introduction**

This final chapter provides an overview of the study and presents its major conclusions based on the key research findings. The theoretical contributions to knowledge in the fields of event studies, sport management, and organisational studies are then discussed, and an applied example of the diffusion work model is presented. This is followed by an overview of the study's practical implications. The chapter concludes by providing the limitations to this study as well as recommendations for future research on this topic.

### **7.2 Overview of the Study and Key Research Findings**

Sustainability-oriented innovations, such as sustainability standards, are offered as potential tools for organisations to improve their existing business practices, while also contributing to social progress and environmental responsibility. The development of *ISO 20121: 2012 – Event sustainability management systems* is an example of an industry-specific innovation as a solution to the growing societal demands for the production of sustainable events. The overall aim of this thesis was to contribute to the practical understanding of the role management standards play in the process of institutionalising sustainability within the management of planned events. A review of the event studies and sport management literature revealed that there was a dearth of empirical research on ISO 20121, despite the “inexhaustible inspiration for academic research” (Castka & Corbett, 2015, p. 175) on other prevalent ISO management system standards such as ISO 9001, ISO 14001, and ISO 26000. Furthermore, the literature review also revealed the need for more empirical research on second-order mega-events (Roche, 2017).

To address these gaps, this research investigated the diffusion and perceptions relating to the adoption of ISO 20121 within the context of the Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games. Zietsma et al. (2017) contended that actors' positions in organisational fields and field-level conditions generally, significantly affect the nature of agency in decision making. Therefore, in Chapter 4, a detailed analysis aimed at identifying the key actors constituting the GC2018 interstitial issue field was presented. An institutional work perspective was then used in Chapter 5 to understand the actions and impacts of agency-infused actors who make strategic choices, and thereby create institutional pressures, around decisions to disseminate (or not) particular standards. Specifically, diffusion work,



as a subset of institutional work, was used in Chapter 5 to identify the key actors and their roles in the diffusion process of ISO 20121. Stamm (2019) conceptualised diffusion work “... to designate activities which promote and disseminate an organizational standard at the field level and support its adoption within organizations” (p. 4). He went on to argue that sustainability standards cannot be considered institutionalised without being widely adopted within an organisational field. This led Stamm (2019) to posit that more research is required to develop our understanding of the “black box” of diffusion in the institutionalisation of sustainability standards. Roger’s (2003) innovation-decision process was thus used in Chapter 6 to examine (potential) adopters’ perceptions of ISO 20121. The innovation-decision process is, “an information-seeking and information-processing activity, where an individual is motivated to reduce uncertainty about the advantages and disadvantages of an innovation” (Roger, 2003, p. 172). Thus, the IDP provided a framework to evaluate the outcomes of actors’ diffusion work activities within the timeframe of the study.

To investigate the diffusion of ISO 20121 within the context of this single-case study, the following research question was proposed:

***What role does diffusion play in the institutionalisation process of an innovation within an organisational field?***

To answer this research question, three sub-questions pertaining to the diffusion work of key actors in the context of GC2018 were developed. These questions are presented in the following sub-sections that provide an overview of the key findings of this study.

### ***7.2.1 Who are the key actors involved in the pre-institutionalisation of ISO 20121?***

Due to the nature of the research, determining the key actors responsible for the diffusion of ISO 20121 was important, as the implementation of the standard was a *voluntary*, rather than *mandatory*, endeavour for field-level adopters. Furthermore, identifying the key diffusion actors was an important step as ISO identifies itself as purely a creator of standards; therefore, the organisation does not actively promote the adoption of its standards.

The diffusion of ISO 20121 occurred within what Zietsma et al. (2017) would describe as an interstitial issue organisational field. The Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games qualified as an interstitial issue field as members of different organisational fields

interacted with one another over the common interest in staging GC2018. Findings revealed seven actor groups involved in the diffusion of ISO 20121 within the GC2018 field:

- (1) The Commonwealth Games Federation (CGF)
- (2) Gold Coast (2018) Commonwealth Games Bid Company (GCCBC)
- (3) The Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games Corporation (GOLDOC)
- (4) The public sector (three levels of government)
- (5) Consultants
- (6) Industry associations
- (7) Universities and researchers

Once the key actors involved in the diffusion of ISO 20121 were established in Chapter Four, their diffusion work activities were then analysed in Chapter Five.

### ***7.2.2 How do key actors diffuse a management system standard within an organisational field?***

Stamm's (2019) four modes of diffusion work were used to analyse the diffusion work carried out by key actors who aimed to disseminate information and increase adoption rates of ISO 20121 within the field. The current study identified the four modes of diffusion in the following manner:

*Concrete:* actors work to get ISO 20121 adopted by a Gold Coast events industry organisation;

*Broad:* the dissemination of information about ISO 20121 to a broad audience of potential adopters through various media;

*Selective:* actors selecting elements of ISO 20121 and integrating them into a Gold Coast events industry organisation; and,

*Conceptual:* actors diffusing specific concepts, definitions, or recommendations within ISO 20121 to a broad audience of potential standard adopters.

Although seven groups of key actors were identified, findings revealed how particular actors strategically engaged in diffusion work through GC2018 in an effort to disseminate information pertaining to ISO 20121, while other actors remained more passive. Specifically, the majority of diffusion work activities identified were carried out by GOLDOC; the organising committee of GC2018. Its diffusion activities were mainly identified as examples of conceptual diffusion as the activities were communicated through its sustainability policies and practices. For example, GOLDOC established nine

sustainability priorities that were created through the implementation of ISO 20121 and often used as the main communication medium for their diffusion activities.

### ***7.2.3 How do perceptions of potential adopters towards the standard affect their adoption decision?***

Rogers' innovation-diffusion process was valuable as an analytical tool in this study because, "Analyzing the interaction among different constituents of the institutional environment is particularly important in the initial phase of adoption of such standards' when the standards are not yet institutionalized" (Delmas & Montes-Sancho, 2011, p. 2). While there was evidence of adopters making partial and full use of the standard, the majority of respondents did not engage in the persuasion stage. When taking into consideration that the GC2018 interstitial field was temporally bounded and that, "practices disappear in diffusion when the mechanisms that caused them to spread ... no longer reinforce them" (Colyvas & Jonnson, 2011, p. 47), findings indicate that the standard was not widely diffused during the event. Stamm (2019) contended that, in order for a standard to become institutionalised, it must be widely diffused first.

In the timeframe under consideration, examining potential adopters from an IDP perspective revealed the absence of government pressure for adoption, a lack of meaningful direct communication of ISO 20121, and an overall lack of diffusion of the standard as evidenced by only one organisation in the GC2018 field having fully adopted the standard. Further, the lack of collaborative diffusion work, the inaction of most key diffusion actors, and the late timing of diffusion activities relative to the event led to diffusion activities that did not illuminate for potential adopters the five key perceived attributes of ISO 20121: relative advantage, complexity, compatibility, trialability, observability. Thus, the findings from this study indicate that GC2018 was not strategically leveraged as a mechanism to diffuse and institutionalise the standard within the local events industry.

## **7.3 Theoretical Implications**

The theoretical implications of this thesis contribute to the advancement of knowledge in three fields of research: event studies, sport management, and organisational studies. This section provides an overview of the key developments in each area. Although it is worth noting that the implications are not limited to the field they are presented in, but

rather, they are categorically presented based on recent calls for future research in each of the respective areas presented.

### ***7.3.1 Event Studies***

This research contributes to the field of event studies by providing an empirical study on the topic of sustainability and events. This area of research was identified as underdeveloped with “significant latitude” (Lockstone, 2018, p. 1055) for future studies and an important area of focus within the field of event studies (Mair & Whitford, 2013). The study extends this area of research within event studies and adds a critical new perspective on sustainable event management by demonstrating the importance of a balanced approach to sustainability beyond the lens of event “greening.” Descriptors of GC2018 as “arguably the most sustainable Games ever” (Powell, 2019, p.157) are not only premature, but also serve to legitimise Rojek’s (2014) critique of event studies as, “overwhelmingly uncritical and self-congratulatory” (p. 32). The purpose of this thesis was not to evaluate or discredit whether or not GC2018 could be labelled as a sustainable event but to examine a way in which events can be used in a manner consistent with what Getz (2019) described as “agents of change” (p.19). The lack of ISO 20121 diffusion demonstrates considerable room for continuous improvement in the event industry’s trajectory towards a logic of sustainability. Furthermore, this study has created new knowledge in event studies by demonstrating how the diffusion of a sustainability-oriented innovation can be enabled and/or inhibited in an event organisational field.

One of the key critiques of event studies has been the lack of theory development in the field; a critical step in realising disciplinary status (Getz, 2018; Baum et al., 2013; Lockstone, 2018). To move event studies towards a distinct discipline, Getz (2012) called for “...those who consider themselves to be event scholars to assess and interpret the vast and rapidly growing literature from many disciplines and fields” (p. 182). The need for theory development of planned events was reiterated by Baum et al. (2013):

It would seem an important step for the study of events (and to become an event studies discipline) that if it wishes to rival its peers in academic standing, corresponding middle range, explanatory models have to emerge that conceptualise new and accepted event knowledge in a revisioned light, forming the building blocks for the field (p .182).

In response to these calls, and a key result of this thesis, is the *field configuring event (FCE) innovation-diffusion model* that was presented as Figure 2.3 in Chapter 2.10. The FCE innovation-diffusion model integrates the following recent works within organisational institutionalism: Zietsma's et al.'s (2017) systematic review of organisational fields; Hinings et al.'s (2017) conceptualisation of institutional infrastructure, and Stamm's (2019) conceptualisation of diffusion work. The purpose of the new model is to provide researchers with a framework for investigating innovation diffusion through planned events. While the FCE innovation-diffusion model was used in this study to examine the diffusion of ISO 20121, it can be applied beyond the context of the standard for future event-related research.

### **7.3.2 Sport Management**

The prevalence of research on sustainability within sport management is more apparent when compared to event studies. However, research on sustainability standards is an underdeveloped topic within the field (Nguyen, 2018; Mallen, 2018). Therefore, this thesis also contributes to the development of knowledge within sustainability in the sport management field. Institutional theory is a prominent theoretical lens within sport management studies. However, Washington and Patterson (2011) warned of the dominance of isomorphic studies within the field, stating:

Our third concern is with the relative lack of research on organizational fields and institutional change. It seems like the sport field has created its own 'iron cage' of institutional theory by only publishing work that examines institutional stability or radical change. We think we need more elaboration of fields in terms of power, status, and history of institutions and the effects on organizations and we need more attention to the factors that change institutional arrangement or practices (p. 9).

Thus, an important theoretical contribution of this study to sport management research is the integral role of the organisational field in affecting actors' agency in terms of intentionality and effort to generate change.

### **7.3.3 Organisational Studies**

The first contribution to organisational studies has to do with management system standards. Within the academic literature examining ISO management standards, studies have primarily focused on macro-level diffusion and institutionalisation of ISO 9001 and ISO 14001 (Castka & Corbett, 2015; Tucek, Castka, & Wakolbinger, 2018). Castka and Corbett (2015) stated future studies should examine the early days of diffusion of less

explored management standards as, “... the true story of why and how some standards became widely adopted, while others did not, will be far messier and nuanced than the macro-level, ex-post view of a few large rational institutions deciding to design and roll out a new standard” (p. 348). This study has attended to the “early days” of the diffusion ISO 20121 and has provided a framework for future researchers to also attend to this underdeveloped area of research.

The second major contribution to organisational studies focuses on recent avenues for future institutional research. Specifically, this study has attended to calls for more empirical accounts of organisational fields and institutional infrastructure:

A further important area is the emergence and intersection of fields, including field overlaps and interstitial spaces between fields ... And in those processes of developing, establishing and legitimizing new institutional infrastructure there is a very important area of research in examining the ways in which fields intersect to allow the transporting and translating of infrastructural elements between fields (Hinings et al., 2017, p. 191)

This study has demonstrated the intersection of two organisational fields: the Commonwealth Games Movement and the Gold Coast events industry. Through the intersection of these two organisational fields emerged an interstitial issue field: GC2018. This current study examined the “transporting and translating” of ISO 20121 through the lens of diffusion work.

#### **7.4 Practical Implications**

The research findings of this thesis have important implications for the professional field of sport and event management. The practical issue that sparked interest in conducting this study concerned the lack of ISO 20121 adoption, despite the prominence of previous ISO management system standards such as ISO 9001, ISO 14001, and ISO 26000. Event professionals have described the standard as “too complex,” with “lacklustre” adoption among SMEs within the events industry (Arena, 2016; Gell, 2019). The lack of SME adoption of ISO 20121 is problematic when taking into consideration that previous studies have shown the events industry is predominately comprised of SMEs (Hallak, McCabe, Brown, & Assaker, 2016; Wood et al., 2003). Findings from Chapter Six showed that potential SME adopters had a narrow view of ISO 20121 as their perception of the standard was that it was strictly an environmental sustainable event management system intended

solely for mega-events. Their myopic view of the applicability of ISO 20121 was attributed to the lack of coordinated and explicit diffusion activities by key diffusion actors aimed at communicating the utility of the standard for this important group of potential adopters. To address this issue, a diffusion model for the adoption of ISO 20121 aimed at SMEs was presented in Chapter Six. The model provides a framework for event managers and event destinations who are looking to embed sustainability within their events through ISO 20121. The following section provides an exemplar of how the model might be applied by demonstrating its potential application in the context of South-East Queensland's proposed bid for the 2032 Olympic Games.

#### ***7.4.1 An Applied Example of the Diffusion Model for the Adoption of ISO 20121: South-East Queensland's Proposed Bid for the 2032 Olympic Games***

Although the ISO 20121 diffusion model applies to many contexts, the State of Queensland presents an appropriate case for its application for two reasons: a potential bid for the 2032 Olympic Games, and the State's ownership of 10 major event venues. First, the prospect of a South-East Queensland bid for the 2032 Olympic Games was given "a massive boost" according to Brisbane Lord Mayor, Adrian Schrinner, due to changes in the bidding process for the Games, which now allows bids from regions and countries (Cassidy, 2019). IOC President Thomas Bach stated that, "flexibility is a necessity to ensure good governance and to have sustainable Olympic Games in the future" when commenting on why the significant change to the bidding process was made (Cassidy, 2019, ¶9). An essential component of the IOC's vision of a sustainable future is ISO 20121; indeed, the IOC's host city contract requires organising committees of the Olympic Games to comply with ISO 20121 and be third-party certified three years prior to the Games.

Second, the State of Queensland owns 10 major event venues, majority of which are located in South-East Queensland, and have "the capacity to stage national or international sports events, recreational or entertainment experiences" (Stadiums Queensland, 2018, ¶1). These venues are managed by Stadiums Queensland that oversees the strategic direction of the venues. Queensland's ownership of the venues, the establishment of Stadiums Queensland, and dedicated venue manager at each Stadiums Queensland facility, creates a formidable network in which the ISO 20121 diffusion model can be applied. Furthermore, one of the five strategic objectives of Stadiums Queensland to be delivered by 2023 is financial growth and sustainability. The adoption of ISO 20121 across the 10 venues aligns

with the aspirations of hosting the Olympic Games, as well as the strategic objectives of Stadiums Queensland.

In regard to the timing of the network, it would be most effective to be carried out during the bidding phase of the 2032 Olympic Games. Evidence demonstrating South-East Queensland's ability to deliver a sustainable 2032 Olympic Games would be a significant contributing factor to the success of its bid; especially, when taking into consideration that it would be a pre-Games legacy that carries on from the legacy of the 2012 London Olympic Games. Thus, it would support that "... the Olympic Games represent an opportunity to demonstrate new technology involving faster adaption to the requirements of sustainability" (Lesjø & Gulbrandsen, 2018, p. 118).

This section applies the network approach to ISO 20121 model presented in the previous chapter. *Stage 1* begins with the initiation of the network and includes the coordination of roles and responsibilities of key diffusion actors. In this case, Stadiums Queensland determines the feasibility and budgeting of the network with funding coming from the Queensland State Government. While the total cost of the network is unresolved, Respondent3 provided an estimation of AUD 5,000 to run ISO 20121 workshops for potential adopters of the standard within the GC2018 context. As Stadiums Queensland is comprised of 10 venues, the cost of contracting an event sustainability consultant to lead the network would be approximately AUD 50,000. The venue managers of each facility would be responsible for implementing the standard at their respective venue. Furthermore, researchers could be included in this network to conduct action research to build knowledge and understanding of the delivery of sustainable mega-events.

Next, *Stage 2* of the network approach involves the development of venue managers' comprehension of ISO 20121 and its applicability to their respective facilities. Initial implementation of the standard begins in this stage in an effort to persuade the group to commit to full use of ISO 20121. Stadiums Queensland and venues decide on whether to follow-through with full implementation of the standard in *Stage 3*. This decision is largely contingent on the state of South-East Queensland's bid for the Olympic Games. Following a decision to follow-through with full implementation of ISO 20121, *Stage 4* marks the most demanding stage of the network. The role of the venue managers intensifies as a majority of the implementation of the standard is completed at their respective venues in this stage. Finally, it is also likely in this stage that venues will seek to obtain second-party certification



of ISO 20121 in an effort to strengthen South-East Queensland's bid for the 2032 Olympic Games.

### **7.5 Limitations of the Research**

The main limitation of this study revolves around when it was conducted relative to the Games. This was particularly evident in regard to evaluating the perceptions of potential adopters of ISO 20121. The interview data for that part of the study covered two years of diffusion activities during the planning phase of GC2018 from September 2015 to October 2017. Thus, it could be assumed that respondents who interviewed later would have experienced more stages of the IDP in relation to the standard. Another temporal consideration was the publication of ISO 20121 (June 2012) in comparison to participant interviews. The standard was identified to be in what Tolbert and Zucker (1996) deemed the pre-institutionalisation stage. As this stage is characterised as having few adopters with limited knowledge of the practice, participants were likely to have much less awareness and knowledge of the innovation in comparison to other more prominent ISO standards.

Another limitation of this study was the use of single-case study research. By focusing on a single-case study of one planned event, the generalisability of the findings from this study may be limited. However, problems with generalisability are a common criticism of case study research (Yin, 2014). To mitigate this issue, two models were developed out of the study's findings; it is proposed these models may help researchers develop a deeper understanding of similar diffusion phenomena in other sport and event research contexts.

A third potential limitation of this research is one that is commonly ascribed to diffusion-based research; a phenomenon known as "pro-innovation bias," which refers to an assumption by researchers that a focal innovation should be uncritically adopted (Rogers & Shoemaker, 1971). However, as pro-innovation bias is mainly attributed to retrospective accounts of successful cases of diffusion (Rogers, 2003), the fact that this research studied diffusion phenomena concurrently as it happened, enabled the avoidance of pro-innovation bias.

### **7.6 Recommendations for Future Research**

This study raises avenues for future research as ISO 20121 has had limited empirical research to date. This section proposes three avenues of further research that build

knowledge around the standard. First, while this study provided a qualitative account of standard diffusion and institutionalisation at the local host community level, further studies should quantify global adoption of ISO 20121 to evaluate its institutionalisation across the macro-level organisational field. Meanwhile, a focus on the institutionalisation at the global level would also answer Hampel, et al.'s (2017) call for future institutional work research focused on examining macro-level institutions. As data on adoption becomes available, studies can examine global diffusion of the standard. Sustainable Events Alliance is currently creating a global ISO 20121 registry that may provide sufficient data to explain global field-level adoption of the standard. A study on global diffusion can provide insight into whether ISO 20121 diffuses through mega-events, or if countries, where ISO 9001 and ISO 14001 certifications are most prevalent, have higher adoption rates of ISO 20121.

Second, a qualitative research methodology that employs participatory action research that builds on the diffusion model for ISO 20121 provides a formidable basis for applied research. Participatory action research would allow for the co-construction of practical knowledge between researcher, diffusion actors, and adopters of ISO 20121. Participatory action research shares many commonalities with institutional work, such as the emphasis on the role of agency as a central construct to institutional stability or instability, and can facilitate the ability of actors to create maintain or disrupt institutions (Hampel et al., 2017).

Finally, the most pertinent issue to address in regard to ISO 20121 is whether the diffusion of the standard would positively contribute to the institutionalisation of sustainability within the events industry. Successfully addressing this issue would have conceptual and practical implications. A multiple-case study approach that examines the differences in economic, social, and environmental outcomes between ISO 20121 certified and non-ISO 20121 events could potentially address this issue. Conceptually, such research would develop a deeper understanding of the relationship between diffusion and institutionalisation and would address Colyvas and Jonnson's (2011) proposition that, "the diffusion of one thing facilitates the institutionalisation of something else" (p. 46). In a practical sense, as Getz (2017; 2019) discerned, the continued challenges of climate change and unsustainable growth of mega-events continues unabated. Therefore, developing a deeper understanding of the extent to which widespread adoption of the standard leads to mere ceremonial conformity (Meyer & Rowan, 1977), or enduring shifts in sustainability-related values and logics in the global event community has never been more critical.



## References

- Abbott, K., & Snidal, D. (2009). The governance triable: Regulatory standards institutions and the shadow of the state. In W. Mattli & N. Woods (Eds.), *The politics of global regulation: Political authority in transition*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- ABC. (2009). Gold Coast eyes 2018 Games bid with land swap. Retrieved 14 June 2016 <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2009-04-07/gold-coast-eyes-2018-games-bid-with-land-swap/1644010?site=goldcoast>
- ABS. (2019). Business performance by size. Australian Bureau of Statistics. Retrieved from <https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Latestproducts/8155.0Main%20Features/42017-18?opendocument&tabname=Summary&prodno=8155.0&issue=2017-18&num=&view=>
- Amis, J., & Silk, M. (2005). Rupture: promoting critical and innovative approaches to the study of sport management. *Journal of Sport Management*, 19(4), 355-366.
- Ammeberg, J., Wik, G., & Hjelm, O. (2001). Auditing external environmental auditors - investigating how ISO 14001 is interpreted and applied in reality. *Eco-Management & Auditing*, 8(4), 183-192.
- Anand, N., & Jones, B. C. (2008). Tournament rituals, category dynamics, and field configuration: The case of the Booker Prize. *Journal of Management Studies*, 45(6), 1036-1060.
- Andersson, T. D., & Lundberg, E. (2013). Commensurability and sustainability: Triple impact assessments of a tourism event. *Tourism management*, 37, 99-109.
- Arena, L. (Producer). (2016). Sustainable events need to be smarter. *CEI: Asia Industry & People's Features*. Retrieved from <http://www.cei.asia/Article/sustainable-events-need-to-be-smarter/405372>
- Ayyagari, M., Beck, T., & Demircug-Kunt, A. (2007). Small and Medium Enterprises Across the Globe. *Small Business Economics*, 29(4), 415-434.
- Babiak, K., & Trendafilova, S. (2011). CSR and environmental responsibility: motives and pressures to adopt green management practices. *Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management*, 18(1), 11-24.
- Banta, D. (1992). Developing outcome standards for quality assurance activities. *International Journal for Quality in Health Care*, 4(1), 25-32.
- Battilana, J. (2006). Agency and institutions: The enabling role of individuals' social position. *Organization*, 13(5), 653-676.
- Battilana, J., & D'ahunno, T. (2009). Institutional work and the paradox of embedded agency. *Institutional work: Actors and agency in institutional studies of organizations*, 31-58.
- Battilana, J., Leca, B., & Bocenbaum, E. (2009). How actors change insitutions: Towards a theory of institutional entrepreneurship *Academy of Management Annals*, 3, 65-107.
- Baum, T., Lockstone-Binney, L., & Robertson, M. (2013). Event studies: Finding fool's gold at the rainbow's end? *International Journal of Event and Festival Management*, 4(3), 179-185.
- Bernstein, S., & Cashore, B. (2007). Can non-state global governance be legitimate? An analytical framework. *Regulation & Governance*, 1(4), 347-371.
- Black, D. (2008). Dreaming big: The pursuit of 'second order' games as a strategic response to globalization. *Sport in Society*, 11(4), 467-480.

- Black, D. (2014). Megas for strivers: The politics of second-order events. In *Leveraging legacies from sports mega-events: Concepts and cases* (pp. 13-23): Springer.
- Black, J., Hopper, M., & Band, C. (2007). Making a success of principles-based regulation. *Law and financial markets review*, 1(3), 191-206.
- Boiral, O. (2007). Corporate greening through ISO 14001: a rational myth? *Organization Science*, 18(1), 127-146.
- Botterill, D. (2000). Social scientific ways of knowing hospitality. In C. Lashley & A. Morrison (Eds.), *In search of hospitality: Theoretical perspectives and debates*. Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann.
- Bourdieu, P. (1977). *Outline of a theory of practice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Bowdin, G., Allen, J., O'Toole, W., Harris, R., & McDonnell, I. (2006). *Events management* (2nd ed.). Oxford, UK: Butterworth-Heinemann.
- Brès, L., & Gond, J.-P. (2014). The visible hand of consultants in the construction of the markets for virtue: Translating issues, negotiating boundaries and enacting responsive regulations. *Human Relations*, 67(11), 1347-1382.
- British Government Panel on Sustainable Development. (1994). *Sustainable Development: The UK Strategy*. London: HMSO.
- Brunsson, N., & Jacobsson, B. (2000). *A World of Standards*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Brunsson, N., Rasche, A., & Seidl, D. (2012). The dynamics of standardization: Three perspectives on standards in organization studies. *Organization Studies*, 33(5-6), 613-632.
- Brunt, P., Horner, S., & Semley, N. (2017). *Research methods in tourism, hospitality and events management*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- BSI. (2007). BS8901: 2007 Specification for a Sustainable Event Management System with Guidance for Use. In: British Standards Institution London.
- Buathong, K., & Lai, P.-C. (2017). Perceived attributes of event sustainability in the MICE industry in Thailand: A viewpoint from governmental, academic, venue and practitioner. *Sustainability*, 9(7), 1151.
- Carlsen, J., & Taylor, A. (2003). Mega-events and urban renewal: The case of the Manchester 2002 Commonwealth Games. *Event Management*, 8(1), 15-22.
- Cascio, J., Woodside, G., & Mitchell, P. (1996). *ISO 14000 guide: The new international environmental management standards*: McGraw-Hill.
- Cassells, S., Lewis, K., & Findlater, A. (2011). SMEs and ISO 14001 adoption: A New Zealand perspective. *Small Enterprise Research*, 18(1), 19-32.
- Cassidy, T. (2019). South-East Queensland's push to host the Olympics just got a little easier. Retrieved from <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-06-27/queensland-olympic-games-bid-just-got-easier/11257178>
- Castka, P., & Balzarova, M. A. (2008a). The impact of ISO 9000 and ISO 14000 on standardisation of social responsibility—an inside perspective. *International journal of production economics*, 113(1), 74-87.
- Castka, P., & Balzarova, M. A. (2008b). ISO 26000 and supply chains—On the diffusion of the social responsibility standard. *International journal of production economics*, 111(2), 274-286.
- Castka, P., & Corbett, C. J. (2015). Management systems standards: diffusion, impact and governance of ISO 9000, ISO 14000, and other management standards. *Foundations and Trends® in Technology, Information and Operations Management*, 7(3-4), 161-379.

- Cavagnaro, E., Postma, A., & de Brito, M. P. (2017). The sustainability agenda and events. In N. Ferdinand & P. J. Kitchin (Eds.), *Events Management: an international approach* (2nd ed.).
- Cavagnaro, E., Postma, A., & Neese, T. (2012). Sustainability and the events industry. In N. Ferdinand & P. J. Kitchin (Eds.), *Events Management: an international approach* (pp. 199-213). London: Sage Publications.
- Caza, A. (2000). Context receptivity: Innovation in an amateur sport organization. *Journal of Sport Management*, 14(3), 227-242.
- CGF. (2011a). 2018 Commonwealth Games Candidature: Report of the CGF Evaluation Commission. Retrieved from [https://thecgf.com/sites/default/files/2018-03/2018\\_CGF\\_Evaluation\\_Commission\\_Report.pdf](https://thecgf.com/sites/default/files/2018-03/2018_CGF_Evaluation_Commission_Report.pdf)
- CGF. (2011b). Candidate City Manual: 2018 Commonwealth Games. Retrieved from <https://thecgf.com/sites/default/files/2018-03/2018-Candidate-City-Manual.pdf>
- CGF. (2014). Commonwealth Games Federation appoints Glasgow 2014 chief Grevemberg as new CEO. Retrieved from <https://thecgf.com/news/commonwealth-games-federation-appoints-glasgow-2014-chief-grevemberg-new-ceo>
- CGF. (2015a). Dame Louise Martin to stand unopposed as CGF President at General Assembly. Retrieved from <https://thecgf.com/news/dame-louise-martin-stand-unopposed-cgf-president-general-assembly>
- CGF. (2015b). *Transformation 2022: The Commonwealth Games strategic plan 2015-2022*. London: CGF Retrieved from [https://thecgf.com/sites/default/files/2018-03/Transformation-2022\\_updateJul15.pdf](https://thecgf.com/sites/default/files/2018-03/Transformation-2022_updateJul15.pdf).
- CGF. (2017). Gold Coast demonstrates its strong hosting credentials as countdown to Commonwealth Games enters final stages. Retrieved from <https://thecgf.com/news/gold-coast-demonstrates-its-strong-hosting-credentials-countdown-commonwealth-games-enters>
- Chalip, L. (2004). Beyond impact: A general model for host community event leverage. In B. Ritchie & D. Adair (Eds.), *Sport tourism: Interrelationships, impact and issues* (pp. 226-252). Clevedon: Channel View Publications.
- Chalip, L. (2014). From legacy to leverage. In J. Grix (Ed.), *Leveraging legacies from sports mega-events: Concepts and cases* (pp. 2-12). London: Palgrave.
- Chalip, L. (2017). Event bidding, legacy, and leverage. *The SAGE handbook of sport management*, 401-420.
- Chappelet, J.-L., & Parent, M. M. (2013). The (wide) world of sports events. In J.-L. Chappelet & M. Parent (Eds.), *Routledge handbook of sports event management* (pp. 1-17). New York: Routledge.
- Chien, P. M., Kelly, S. J., & Gill, C. (2018). Identifying objectives for mega-event leveraging: a non-host city case. *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*, 36(2), 168-184.
- Cicarelli, J., & Kowarsky, D. (1973). The economics of the Olympic games. *Business and Economic Dimensions*, 9(September-October), 1-5.
- Clark, J., & Kearns, A. (2016). Going for gold: A prospective assessment of the economic impacts of the Commonwealth Games 2014 on the East End of Glasgow. *Environment and Planning C: Government and Policy*, 34(8), 1474-1500.
- Clark, R., & Misener, L. (2015). Understanding Urban Development Through a Sport Events Portfolio: A Case Study of London, Ontario. *Journal of Sport Management*, 29(1), 11-26.
- Clarkson, M. (1995). A stakeholder framework for analysing and evaluating corporate social performance. *Academy of management review*, 20(1), 92-117.

- Collins, A., & Flynn, A. (2008). Measuring the environmental sustainability of a major sporting event: a case study of the FA Cup Final. *Tourism Economics*, 14(4), 751-768.
- Collins, A., Jones, C., & Munday, M. (2009). Assessing the environmental impacts of mega sporting events: Two options? *Tourism management*, 30(6), 828-837.
- Colyvas, J. A., & Jonsson, S. (2011). Ubiquity and legitimacy: Disentangling diffusion and institutionalization. *Sociological theory*, 29(1), 27-53.
- Corbett, C. J. (2006). Global diffusion of ISO 9000 certification through supply chains. *Manufacturing & Service Operations Management*, 8(4), 330-350.
- Corbett, C. J., & Kirsch, D. A. (2001). International diffusion of ISO 14000 certification. *Production and Operations Management*, 10(3), 327-342.
- Cornelissen, S. (2004). Sport mega-events in Africa: processes, impacts and prospects. *Tourism and Hospitality Planning & Development*, 1(1), 39-55.
- Costa, C. A. (2005). The status and future of sport management: A Delphi study. *Journal of Sport Management*, 19(2), 117-142.
- Creswell, J. W. (2009). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (3rd ed.). London: Sage.
- Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Qualitative inquiry & research design: Choosing among five approaches* (Third ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Crompton, J. L. (1999). *Measuring the economic impact of visitors to sports tournaments and special events*: Division of Professional Services, National Recreation and Park Association.
- Crotty, M. (1998). *The foundations of social research: Meaning and perspective in the research process*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Crowther, P., Bostock, J., & Perry, J. (2015). Review of established methods in event research. *Event Management*, 19(1), 93-107.
- Dacin, M. T., Goodstein, J., & Scott, W. R. (2002). Institutional theory and institutional change: Introduction to the special research forum. *Academy of Management Journal*, 45, 45-56.
- Dahmann, F., & Grosvold, J. (2017). Environmental managers and institutional work: Reconciling tensions of competing institutional logics. *Business Ethics Quarterly*, 27(2), 263-291.
- Damanpour, F., & Evan, W. M. (1984). Organizational innovation and performance: the problem of "organizational lag". *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 392-409.
- Damanpour, F., & Schneider, M. (2006). Phases of the adoption of innovation in organizations: Effects of environment, organization and top Managers1. *British Journal of Management*, 17(3), 215-236.
- Darcy, S., & Dickson, T. (Producer). (2018). Commonwealth Games have better integrated para sports, but society needs to catch up. Retrieved from <https://theconversation.com/commonwealth-games-have-better-integrated-para-sports-but-society-needs-to-catch-up-94491>
- de Certeau, M. (1984). *The practices of everyday life*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Deephouse, D. L. (1999). To be different, or to be the same? It's a question (and theory) of strategic balance. *Strategic management journal*, 20(2), 147-166.
- Delmas, M., & Montiel, I. (2008). The diffusion of voluntary international management standards: Responsible Care, ISO 9000, and ISO 14001 in the chemical industry. *Policy Studies Journal*, 36(1), 65-93.



- Delmas, M. A. (2002). The diffusion of environmental management standards in Europe and in the United States: An institutional perspective. *Policy Sciences*, 35(1), 91-119.
- Delmas, M. A., & Montes-Sancho, M. J. (2011). An institutional perspective on the diffusion of international management system standards: The case of the environmental management standard ISO 14001. *Business Ethics Quarterly*, 21(01), 103-132.
- Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2005). Introduction: The discipline and practice of qualitative research. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 1-32). Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2011). Introduction: The discipline and practice of qualitative research. In *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research* (fourth ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Dheensaw, C. (1994). *The Commonwealth Games: The First 60 Years, 1930-1990*. Victoria, Canada: Orca Book Publishers.
- Dickson, C., & Arcodia, C. (2010). Promoting sustainable event practice: The role of professional associations. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 29(2), 236-244.
- DiMaggio, J. (1988). Interests and agency in institutional theory. In L. Zucker (Ed.), *Institutional patterns and organizations: Culture and environment* (pp. 3-22). Cambridge, MA: Ballinger.
- DiMaggio, J., & Powell, W. W. (1983). The iron cage revisited: Institutional isomorphism and collective rationality in organisational fields *American Sociological Review*, 48(2), 147-160.
- DiMaggio, J., & Powell, W. W. (1991). *The new institutionalism in organizational analysis*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Dingle, G. (2009). Sustaining the race: a review of literature pertaining to the environmental sustainability of motorsport. *International Journal of Sports Marketing and Sponsorship*, 11(1), 75-91.
- Djaballah, M., Hautbois, C., & Desbordes, M. (2015). Non-mega sporting events' social impacts: a sensemaking approach of local governments' perceptions and strategies. *European Sport Management Quarterly*, 15(1), 48-76.
- Dolf, M., & Teehan, P. J. S. M. R. (2015). Reducing the carbon footprint of spectator and team travel at the University of British Columbia's varsity sports events. 18(2), 244-255.
- Dowling, M., & Smith, J. (2016). The Institutional Work of Own the Podium in Developing High-Performance Sport in Canada. *Journal of Sport Management*, 30(4), 396-410.
- Dredge, D., & Whitford, M. (2010). Policy for sustainable and responsible festivals and events: institutionalisation of a new paradigm—a response. *Journal of Policy Research in Tourism, Leisure & Events*, 2(1), 1-13.
- Duignan, M. B., Down, S., & O'Brien, D. (2020). Entrepreneurial leveraging in liminoid olympic transit zones. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 80, 102774.
- Dwyer, L., Forsyth, P., & Spurr, R. (2006). Assessing the economic impacts of events: A computable general equilibrium approach. *Journal of Travel Research*, 45(1), 59-66.
- EarthCheck. (2019). About. Retrieved from <https://earthcheck.org/about/>
- Edwards, A., & Skinner, J. (2009). *Qualitative research in sport management*. Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann.
- Edwards, J. R., & Washington, M. (2015). Establishing a "safety net": Exploring the emergence and maintenance of college hockey inc. and NCAA division I hokcey. *Journal of Sport Management*, 29, 291-304.



- Eisenhardt, K. M. (1989). Building theories from case study research. *Academy of management review*, 14(4), 532-550.
- Eisenstadt, S. N. (1980). Cultural orientations, institutional entrepreneurs, and social change: Comparative analysis of traditional civilizations. *American journal of Sociology*, 85(4), 840-869.
- Elefsiniotis, P., & Wareham, D. G. (2005). ISO 14000 environmental management standards: their relation to sustainability. *Journal of Professional Issues in Engineering Education and Practice*, 131(3), 208-212.
- Elkington, J. (1998). *Cannibals with forks: The triple bottom line of 21st century business*. Oxford: Capstone.
- Elstad, B. (1996). Volunteer perception of learning and satisfaction in a mega-event: The case of the XVII Olympic Winter Games in Lillehammer. *Festival Management and Event Tourism*, 4(3-4), 75-83.
- Emery, P. (2015). The bidders' and promoters' perspectives. In *Routledge handbook of sports event management* (pp. 39-60). London: Routledge.
- Fay, B. (1975). Social Theory and Social Practice. London: George Allen &.
- FIVB. (2013). Beach volleyball fails to make 2018 Commonwealth Games. Retrieved from <http://www.fivb.org/viewPressRelease.asp?No=37511&Language=en#.XehV3nczaUk>
- Fligstein, N. (1997). Social skill and insitutional theory. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 40, 397-405.
- Foreman, P., & Parent, M. M. (2008). The process of organizational identity construction in iterative organization. *Corporation Reputation Review*, 11(3), 222-244.
- Formica, S. (1998). The development of festivals and special events. *Festival Management and Event Tourism*, 5(3), 131-137.
- Friedland, R., & Alford, R. R. (1991). Bringing society back in: Symbols, practices, and institutional contradictions. In W. W. Powell & P. J. DiMaggio (Eds.), *The new institutionalism in organizational analysis* (pp. 232-263). Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Furnari, S. (2016). Institutional fields as linked arenas: Inter-field resource dependence, institutional work and institutional change. *Human Relations*, 69(3), 551-580.
- FutureWorks. (2016). Roadmap for the development of a sustainability programme for the 2022 Commonwealth Games, Durban. Retrieved from [http://www.durban.gov.za/City\\_Services/development\\_planning\\_management/environmental\\_planning\\_climate\\_protection/Projects/Documents/CommonwealthGamesRoadmap.pdf](http://www.durban.gov.za/City_Services/development_planning_management/environmental_planning_climate_protection/Projects/Documents/CommonwealthGamesRoadmap.pdf)
- GCCC. (2015). *Gold Coast event book*. Gold Coast: City of Gold Coast.
- GCCC. (2016). GC2018 benefits. Retrieved from <https://www.goldcoast.qld.gov.au/documents/bf/gc2018-benefits.pdf>
- GCCC. (2018). Welcome to the City of Gold Coast data portal. Retrieved from <http://data-goldcoast.opendata.arcgis.com/>
- Gell, M. (Producer). (2019). Sustainable events: Reducing emissions in the long run. Retrieved from <https://www.campaignasia.com/article/sustainable-events-reducing-emissions-in-the-long-run/452196>
- Getz, D. (2000). *Developing a research agenda for the event management field*. Paper presented at the Events beyond 2000: Setting the agenda, proceedings of conference on event evaluation, research and education, Sydney.
- Getz, D. (2002). Event studies and event management: On becoming an academic discipline. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management*, 9(1), 12-23.

- Getz, D. (2005). *Event Management and Event Tourism* (2nd ed.). New York: Cognizant.
- Getz, D. (2008). Event tourism: Definition, evolution, and research. *Tourism management*, 29, 403-428.
- Getz, D. (2009). Policy for sustainable and responsible festivals and events: Institutionalization of a new paradigm. *Journal of Policy Research in Tourism, Leisure and Events*, 1(1), 61-78.
- Getz, D. (2012a). Event studies. In S. J. Page & J. Connell (Eds.), *The routledge handbook of events* (pp. 25-45). London: Routledge.
- Getz, D. (2012b). Event studies: Discourses and future directions. *Event Management*, 16, 171-187.
- Getz, D. (2012c). *Event studies: Theory, research and policy for planned events*. New York: Routledge.
- Getz, D. (2017). Developing a framework for sustainable event cities. *Event Management*, 21, 575-591.
- Getz, D. (2019). Shifting the paradigm: A theory of change model. *Journal of Policy Research in Tourism, Leisure and Events*, 11(S1), s19-s26.
- Getz, D., & Page, S. J. (2016a). *Event studies: Theory, research and policy for planned events*: Routledge.
- Getz, D., & Page, S. J. (2016b). Progress and prospects for event tourism research. *Tourism management*, 52, 593-631.
- Giddens, A. (1984). *The constitution of society: Outline of a theory of structuration*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Glynn, M. A. (2008). Configuring the field of play: How hosting the Olympic Games impacts civic community. *Journal of Management Studies*, 45(6), 1117-1146.
- Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games Bid Ltd. (2011). *Gold Coast City Candidate City File: Volume 1*. Retrieved from [https://thecgf.com/sites/default/files/2018-03/Gold\\_Coast\\_VOL\\_1.pdf](https://thecgf.com/sites/default/files/2018-03/Gold_Coast_VOL_1.pdf)
- Goldblatt, J. (2016). Donald Getz: The symbiotic innovator. *Anatolia*, 27(2), 305-308.
- GOLDOC. (2015). Sustainability report 2014-2015 from Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games™ <https://gc2018.com/sites/default/files/2017-09/CS101%20-%20Sustainability%20Report%202014%20-%202015.pdf>
- GOLDOC. (2017a). Human rights policy. from Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games™ <https://gc2018.com/sites/default/files/2017-11/Human%20Rights%20Policy%20GC2018.pdf>
- GOLDOC. (2017b). Sustainability report 2015-2016. from Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games™ [https://gc2018.com/sites/default/files/2017-09/CS537\\_-\\_SUS\\_Sustainability\\_Report\\_2015-16\\_Final.pdf](https://gc2018.com/sites/default/files/2017-09/CS537_-_SUS_Sustainability_Report_2015-16_Final.pdf)
- GOLDOC. (2018). Post-Games sustainability report. from Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games™ [https://gc2018.com/sites/default/files/2018-08/Sustainability%20Report%20-%20Post%20Games%20\(Final\).pdf](https://gc2018.com/sites/default/files/2018-08/Sustainability%20Report%20-%20Post%20Games%20(Final).pdf)
- Goodland, R. (1995). The concept of environmental sustainability. *Annual Review of Ecology and Systematics*, 26, 1-24.
- Gopalakrishnan, S., & Damanpour, F. (1997). A review of innovation research in economics, sociology and technology management. *Omega*, 25(1), 15-28.
- Gotzamani, K. D., & Tsiotras, G. D. (2001). An empirical study of the ISO 9000 standards' contribution towards total quality management. *International Journal of Operations & Production Management*, 21(10), 1326-1342.
- Gratton, D., Raciti, M., Getz, D., & Andersson, T. D. (2016). Resident valuation of planned events: An event portfolio pilot study. *Event Management*, 20(4), 607-622.

- Gratton, C., Dobson, N., & Shibli, S. (2000). The economic importance of major sports events: A case-study of six events. *Managing Leisure*, 5, 17-28.
- Gratton, C., & Jones, I. (2014). *Research methods for sports studies*. New York: Routledge.
- Greenwood, R., Oliver, C., Lawrence, T. B., & Meyer, R. E. (2017). Introduction. In R. Greenwood, C. Oliver, T. Lawrence, & R. E. Meyer (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of organizational institutionalism* (pp. 1-26). London: SAGE.
- Greenwood, R., Oliver, C., Sahlin-Andersson, K., & Suddaby, R. (2008). Introduction. In R. Greenwood, C. Oliver, R. Suddaby, & K. Sahlin-Andersson (Eds.), *Sage handbook of organization studies* (pp. 1-46). London, UK: Sage.
- Greenwood, R., Raynard, M., Kodeih, F., Micelotta, E. R., & Lounsbury, M. (2011). Institutional complexity and organizational responses. *Academy of Management Annals*, 5(1), 317-371.
- Guba, E. G. (1990). The alternative paradigm dialog. In E. Guba (Ed.), *The paradigm dialog* (pp. 17-30). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Guba, E. G., & Lincoln, Y. S. (1981). *Effective evaluation: Improving the usefulness of evaluation results through responsive and naturalistic approaches*: Jossey-Bass.
- Guba, E. G., & Lincoln, Y. S. (1994). Competing paradigms in qualitative research. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 105-117). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Guizzardi, A., Guizzardi, A., Mariani, M., Mariani, M., Prayag, G., & Prayag, G. (2017). Environmental impacts and certification: evidence from the Milan World Expo 2015. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 29(3), 1052-1071.
- Guler, I., Guillen, M. F., & MacPherson, J. M. (2002). Global competition, institutions and the diffusion of organizational practices: The international spread of ISO 9000 quality certificates. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 47, 207-233.
- Hagn, F., & Maennig, W. (2008). Employment effects of the football World Cup 1974 in Germany. *Labour Economics*, 15(5), 1062-1075.
- Halila, F. (2007). Networks as a means of supporting the adoption of organizational innovations in SMEs: the case of Environmental Management Systems (EMSs) based on ISO 14001. *Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management*, 14(3), 167-181.
- Hall, C. M. (1989). The definition and analysis of hallmark tourist events. *GeoJournal*, 19(3), 263-268.
- Hall, C. M. (2012). Sustainable mega-events: Beyond the myth of balanced approaches to mega-event sustainability. *Event Management*, 16, 119-131.
- Hallak, R., McCabe, V. S., Brown, G., & Assaker, G. (2016). Segmenting meeting and event management organizations based on business performance. *Event Management*, 20(3), 383-393.
- Hampel, C. E., Lawrence, T. B., & Tracey, P. (2017). Institutional work: Taking stock and making it matter. In R. Greenwood, C. Oliver, T. Lawrence, & R. E. Meyer (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of organizational institutionalism* (2nd ed., pp. 558-590). London: SAGE.
- Hardy, B., King, N., & Rodriguez, A. (2014). The experiences of patients and carers in the daily management of care at the end of life. *International Journal of Palliative Nursing*, 20(12), 591-598.
- Hardy, C., & Maguire, S. (2010). Discourse, field-configuring events, and change in organizations and institutional fields: Narratives of DDT and the Stockholm Convention. *Academy of Management Journal*, 53(6), 1365-1392.

- Harris, R., & Jago, L. (1999). Event education and training in Australia: The current state of play. *Australian Journal of Hospitality Management*, 6(1), 45-45.
- Harris, R., & Schlenker, K. (2018). An Exploratory Study of. *Event Management*, 22(6), 1057-1071.
- Hart, S. L. (1997). Beyond greening: strategies for a sustainable world. *Harvard Business Review*, 75(1), 66-77.
- Hashem, G., & Tann, J. (2007). The adoption of ISO 9000 standards within the Egyptian context: A diffusion of innovation approach. *Total Quality Management & Business Excellence*, 18(6), 631-652.
- Hawkins, D. E., & Goldblatt, J. J. (1995). Event management implications for tourism education. *Tourism Recreation Research*, 20(2), 42-45.
- Helfen, M., & Sydow, J. (2013). Negotiating as institutional work: The case of labour standards and international framework agreements. *Organization Studies*, 34(8), 1073-1098.
- Helms, W. S., Oliver, C., & Webb, K. (2012). Antecedents of settlement on a new institutional practice: Negotiation of the ISO 26000 standard on social responsibility. *Academy of Management Journal*, 55(5), 1120-1145.
- Helms, W. S., & Patterson, K. D. W. (2014). Eliciting acceptance for "illicit" organizations: The positive implication of stigma for MMA organizations. *Academy of Management Journal*, 37, 1453-1484.
- Henderson, S. (2011). The development of competitive advantage through sustainable event management. *Worldwide Hospitality and Tourism Themes*, 3, 245-257.
- Hillary, R. (2004). Environmental management systems and the smaller enterprise. *Journal of cleaner production*, 12(6), 561-569.
- Hillary, R. (2006). Using network approaches to engage small and medium-sized enterprises in Environmental Management Systems. *The International Handbook on Environmental Technology Management*, 1, 241-258.
- Hinings, C., Logue, D., & Zietsma, C. (2017). Fields, institutional infrastructure and governance. *The Sage handbook of organizational institutionalism*.
- Hirsch, P. M., & Lounsbury, M. (1997). Ending the family quarrel: Toward a reconciliation of "old" and "new" institutionalisms. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 40(4), 406-418.
- Hoerber, L., & Hoerber, O. (2012). Determinants of an innovation process: A case study of technological innovation in a community sport organization. *Journal of Sport Management*, 26(3), 213-223.
- Hoffman, A. J. (1999). Institutional evolution and change: Environmentalism and the US chemical industry. *Academy of Management Journal*, 42, 351-371.
- Hoffman, A. J., & Ventresca, M. J. (2002). *Organizations, policy and the natural environment: Institutional and strategic perspectives*: Stanford University Press.
- Holmes, K., Hughes, M., Mair, J., & Carlsen, J. (2015). *Events and sustainability*: Routledge.
- Horne, J. (2007). The four 'knowns' of sports mega-events. *Leisure Studies*, 26(1), 81-96.
- Houlihan, B. (2014). *The Government and Politics of Sport*. London: Routledge.
- Hoyle, D. (2009). *ISO 9000 Quality Systems Handbook: Using the standards as a framework for business improvement*: Routledge.
- IOC. (2009). *2018 candidature acceptance procedure*. Lausanne: International Olympic Committee.
- ISO. (2003). *The consumer and standards: Guidance and principles for consumer participation in standards development*. Retrieved from

- <https://www.iso.org/files/live/sites/isoorg/files/archive/pdf/en/standardsandconsumer.pdf>
- ISO. (2012). *ISO 20121: Event sustainability management systems - Requirements with guidance for use*. Geneva, Switzerland: ISO.
- ISO. (2013). Welcome to the ISO 20121 web site Retrieved from <https://www.iso20121.org>
- ISO. (2015). The ISO survey of management system standard certifications 2015: Executive summary. Retrieved from [https://www.iso.org/files/live/sites/isoorg/files/archive/pdf/en/the\\_iso\\_survey\\_of\\_management\\_system\\_standard\\_certifications\\_2015.pdf](https://www.iso.org/files/live/sites/isoorg/files/archive/pdf/en/the_iso_survey_of_management_system_standard_certifications_2015.pdf)
- ISO. (2016). *The ISO Survey of Management System Standard Certifications 2016*. In.
- ISO. (2018). Standards. Retrieved from <https://www.iso.org/standards.html>
- ISO. (2019). ISO management system standards. Retrieved from <https://www.iso.org/management-system-standards-list.html>
- Jackson, E., & Layt, S. (Producer). (2018). Commonwealth Games snub is a 'kick in the guts': ex-labor minister. *Brisbane Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.brisbanetimes.com.au/politics/queensland/commonwealth-games-snub-is-a-kick-in-the-guts-ex-labor-minister-20180329-p4z70i.html>
- Jepperson, R. L. (1991). Institutions, institutional effects, and institutionalism. *The new institutionalism in organizational analysis*, 6, 143-163.
- Johnston, P., Everard, M., Santillo, D., & Robert, K. H. (2007). Reclaiming the definition of sustainability. *Environmental Science and Pollution Research*, 14, 60-66.
- Jones, C. (2001). Mega-events and host-region impacts: determining the true worth of the 1999 Rugby World Cup. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 3(3), 241-251.
- Jones, M. (2017). *Sustainable event management: A practical guide* (third ed.). New York: Routledge.
- Kassens-Noor, E., & Lauermann, J. (2018). Mechanisms of policy failure: Boston's 2024 Olympic bid. *Urban Studies*, 55(15), 3369-3384.
- Kates, R. W., Parris, T. M., & Leiserowitz, A. A. (2005). What is sustainable development? Goals, indicators, values, and practice. *Environment*, 47(3), 8-21.
- Keech, M. (2018). Exploring the growth of the Commonwealth Games. In T. F. Carter, D. Burdsey, & M. Doidge (Eds.), *Transforming sport: Knowledge, Practices, Structures* (pp. 136-148). New York: Routledge.
- Kellett, P., Hede, A.-M., & Chalip, L. (2008). Social policy for sport events: Leveraging (relationships with) teams from other nations for community benefit. *European Sport Management Quarterly*, 8(2), 101-121.
- Kellison, T. B., & Hong, S. (2015). The adoption and diffusion of pro-environmental stadium design. *European Sport Management Quarterly*, 15(2), 249-269.
- Kellison, T. B., & Kim, Y. K. (2014). Marketing pro-environmental venues in professional sport: Planting seeds of change among existing and prospective consumers. *Journal of Sport Management*, 28(1), 34-48.
- Kelly, D. M., & Fairley, S. (2018). The utility of relationships in the creation and maintenance of an event portfolio. *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*, 36(2), 260-275.
- Kelly, D. M., Fairley, S., & O'Brien, D. (2019). It was never ours: Formalised event hosting rights and leverage. *Tourism Management*, 73, 123-133.
- Kerwer, D. (2005). Rules that many use: standards and global regulation. *Governance*, 18(4), 611-632.
- Kim, J., Boo, S., & Kim, Y. (2013). Patterns and trends in event tourism study topics over 30 years. *International Journal of Event and Festival Management*, 4(1), 66-83.



- King, N. (2004). Using template analysis in the thematic analysis of text. In 'Essential guide to qualitative methods in organizational research'. (Eds G Symon, C Cassell) pp. 256–270. In: Sage: London.
- King, N. (2012). Doing template analysis. In *Qualitative organizational research: Core methods and current challenges* (pp. 426-450). London: Sage Publications.
- Kirby, S. I., Duignan, M. B., & McGillivray, D. (2018). Mega-Sport Events, Micro and Small Business Leveraging: Introducing the. *Event Management*, 22(6), 917-931.
- Klewitz, J., & Hansen, E. G. (2014). Sustainability-oriented innovation of SMEs: a systematic review. *Journal of cleaner production*, 65, 57-75.
- Kolah, A. (2013). Global opportunities for sports marketing, infrastructure & consultancy services to 2020. Retrieved from <http://imrsponsorship.com/assets/global-opportunities-for-sports-marketing-aug13.pdf>
- Konstantaki, M., & Wickens, E. (2010). Residents' perceptions of environmental and security issues at the 2012 London Olympic Games. *Journal of Sport & Tourism*, 15(4), 337-357.
- Kraatz, M. S., & Block, E. S. (2008). Organizational implications of institutional pluralism. *The Sage handbook of organizational institutionalism*, 840, 243-275.
- Kvale, S., & Brinkmann, S. (2009). *Interviews*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Laing, J., & Frost, W. (2010). How green was my festival: Exploring challenges and opportunities associated with staging green events. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 29(2), 261-267.
- Lampel, J., & Meyer, A. D. (2008). Field-Configuring Events as Structuring Mechanisms: How Conferences, Ceremonies, and Trade Shows Constitute New Technologies, Industries, and Marketsguest Editors Introduction. *Journal of Management Studies*, 45(6), 1025-1035.
- Lashley, C. (2004). *Escaping the tyranny of relevance: Some reflections on hospitality management education*. Paper presented at the Association for Tourism in Higher Education, Buckinghamshire, UK.
- Lashley, C. (2007). Discovering hospitality: Observations from recent research. *International Journal of Culture, Tourism and Hospitality Research*, 1(3), 214-226.
- Lauermann, J. (2014). Competition through interurban policy making: Bidding to host megaevents as entrepreneurial networking. *Environment and Planning A*, 46(11), 2638-2653.
- Lauermann, J. (2016). Made in transit: Mega-events and policy mobilities. In N. B. Salazar, C. Timmerman, J. Wets, L. G. Gato, & S. Van den Broucke (Eds.), *Mega-event mobilities: A critical analysis* (pp. 90-107). London: Routledge.
- Lave, J., & Wenger, E. (1991). *Situated learning. Legitimate peripheral participation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Lawrence, T. B., Leca, B., & Zilber, T. (2013). Institutional work: Current research, new directions and overlooked issues. *Organization Studies*, 34(8), 1023-1033.
- Lawrence, T. B., & Masoud, S. (2008). Institutional Theory. In W. Donsbach (Ed.), *The International Encyclopedia of Communication*. Oxfors: Blackwell Publishing.
- Lawrence, T. B., & Suddaby, R. (2006). Institutions and institutional work. In S. Clegg, C. Hardy, T. Lawrence, & W. Nord (Eds.), *Handbook of organisation studies* (2nd ed., pp. 215-254). London: Sage.
- Lawrence, T. B., Suddaby, R., & Leca, B. (2009). Introduction: Theorizing and studying institutional work. In T. Lawrence, R. Suddaby, & B. Leca (Eds.), *Institutional work actors and agency in institutional studies of organization* (pp. 1-27). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Lawrence, T. B., Suddaby, R., & Leca, B. (2011). Institutional work: Refocusing institutional studies of organization. *Journal of Management Inquiry*, 20(1), 52-58.
- Lawrence, T. B., Winn, M. I., & Jennings, P. D. (2001). The temporal dynamics of institutionalization. *Academy of management review*, 26(4), 624-644.
- Lawson, H. A. (2005). Empowering people, facilitating community development, and contributing to sustainable development: The social work of sport, exercise, and physical education programs. *Sport, Education and Society*, 10(1), 135-160.
- Leca, B., Battilana, J., & Boxenbaum, E. (2008). *Agency and institutions: A review of institutional entrepreneurship*: Harvard Business School Cambridge, MA.
- Lee, K. H. (2013). *The attractiveness of nations in global competition: An empirical assessment of the effects of country attractiveness on the success of strategy for hosting international sports events, 1990-2012*. Unpublished PhD dissertation. Lausanne: IDHEAP.
- Lélé, S. M. (1991). Sustainable development: A critical review. *World Development*, 19(6), 607-621.
- Leopkey, B., & Parent, M. M. (2012). Olympic games legacy: From general benefits to sustainable long-term legacy. *The International Journal of the History of Sport*, 29(6), 924-943. doi:10.1080/09523367.2011.623006
- Leopkey, B., Salisbury, P., & Tinaz, C. (2019). Examining legacies of unsuccessful olympic bids: evidence from a cross-case analysis. *Journal of Global Sport Management*, 1-28.
- Lesjø, J. H. (2000). Lillehammer 1994: Planning, Figurations and the Green Winter Games. *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, 35(3), 282-293.
- Lesjø, J. H., & Gulbrandsen, E. A. (2018). The Olympics: institutionalization and standardization of sustainability. In B. P. McCullough & T. B. Kellison (Eds.), *Routledge Handbook of Sport and the Environment* (pp. 137-148): Routledge.
- Lincoln, Y., & Guba, E. (1985). Naturalistic observation. *Thousand Oaks, CA*.
- Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (2000). The only generalization there is: There is no generalization. In R. Gomm, M. Hammersley, & P. Foster (Eds.), *Case study method: Key issues, key texts* (pp. 27-44). London: Sage.
- Lockstone-Binney, L. (2018). Knowledge generation in event studies: What can doctoral research tell us about evolution of the field? *Event Management*, 22, 1047-1056.
- Lockstone-Binney, L., & Ong, F. (2019). Event studies: Progression and future in the field. In S. Beeton & A. Morrison (Eds.), *The study of food, tourism, hospitality and events* (pp. 37-46). Singapore: Springer.
- Lockstone, L., & Baum, T. (2008). Fun in the family: Tourism and the Commonwealth Games. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 10(6), 497-509.
- London 2012. (2004). *Candidate File, London 2012*. Retrieved from London:
- Loy, J. W. (1968). Sociopsychological attributes associated with the early adoption of a sport innovation. *The Journal of Psychology*, 70(2), 141-147.
- Mackay, D. (2015). Duncan Mackay: Elections of Coe and Martin testament to great success of London 2012 and Glasgow 2014. *inside the games*. Retrieved from <https://www.insidethegames.biz/articles/1029846/duncan-mackay-elections-of-coe-and-martin-testament-to-great-success-of-london-2012-and-glasgow-2014>
- Maguire, S., Hardy, C., & Lawrence, T. B. (2004). Institutional entrepreneurship in emerging fields: HIV/AIDS treatment advocacy in Canada. *Academy of Management Journal*, 47, 657-679.

- Mair, J., & Whitford, M. (2013). An exploration of events research: Event topics, themes and emerging trends. *International Journal of Event and Festival Management*, 4(1), 6-30.
- Mallen, C. (2018). Robustness of the sport and environmental sustainability literature and where to go from here. In B. P. McCullough & T. B. Kellison (Eds.), *Routledge handbook of sport and the environment* (pp. 11-35). London: Routledge.
- Mallen, C., Stevens, J., & Adams, I. J. (2011). A content analysis of environmental sustainability research in a sport-related journal sample. *Journal of Sport Management*, 25, 240-256.
- Mansfeld, E. (1968). *Industrial research and technological change: An econometric analysis*. New York: W.W. Norton and Company.
- Marcin, M. (2017). The Commonwealth Games as an Example of Bringing States Closer Through Sport. *Physical Culture and Sport. Studies and Research*, 73(1), 36-43.
- May, V. (1995). Environmental implications of the 1992 winter Olympic Games. *Tourism management*, 16(4), 269-275.
- McLaughlin, C. (2014). Commonwealth Games: Lack of interest in hosting future Games. *BBC*. Retrieved from <https://www.bbc.com/sport/commonwealth-games/25832867>
- Mehta, S., & Wilcock, A. (1996). Quality system standards in the Canadian food and beverage industry. *Quality Management Journal*, 4(1), 72-96.
- Meidinger, E. (2001). Environmental Certification Programs and U.S. environmental law: Closer than you may think. *Environmental Law Reporter*, 31(2), 10162-10179.
- Meidinger, E. (2006). The administrative law of global private-public regulation: the case of forestry. *European Journal of International Law*, 17(1), 47-87.
- Merriam, S. B., & Tisdell, E. J. (2015). *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation*: John Wiley & Sons.
- Meyer, A. D., Gaba, V., & Colwell, K. A. (2005). Organizing far from equilibrium: Nonlinear change in organizational fields. *Organization Science*, 16(5), 456-473.
- Meyer, J. W., & Rowan, B. (1977). Institutionalised organizations: formal structure as myth and ceremony. *American journal of Sociology*, 83, 340-363.
- Millar, M., & Park, S. (2018). Industry professionals' perceptions of sustainability in meeting and event education. *Journal of Teaching in Travel & Tourism*, 18(2), 123-137.
- Miner, J. B. (2003). The rated importance, scientific validity, and practical usefulness of organizational behavior theories: A quantitative review. *Academy of Management Learning & Education*, 2(3), 250-268.
- Mitchell, H., & Stewart, M. F. (2015). What should you pay to host a party? An economic analysis of hosting sports mega-events. *Applied Economics*, 47(15), 1550-1561.
- Moore, K. (1989). 'The warmth of comradeship': the first British empire games and imperial solidarity. *The International Journal of the History of Sport*, 6(2), 242-251.
- Morse, J. M. (1991). Approaches to qualitative-quantitative methodological triangulation. *Nursing Research*, 40(1), 120-123.
- Müller, M. (2015). What makes an event a mega-event? Definitions and sizes. *Leisure Studies*, 34(6), 627-642.
- Murphy, C., & Yates, J. (2009). *The International Organization for Standardization*. London: Routledge.
- Murray, S. (2012). The two halves of sports-diplomacy. *Diplomacy & Statecraft*, 23(3), 576-592.
- Musgrave, J., & Henderson, S. (2015). Changing audience behaviour: A pathway to sustainable event management. In C.M. Hall, S. Gössling, & D. Scott (Eds.), *The*



- Routledge handbook of tourism and sustainability* (pp. 384-396). Abingdon, UK: Routledge.
- Musgrave, J., & Raj, R. (2009). Introduction to a conceptual framework for sustainable events. In R. Raj & J. Musgrave (Eds.), *Event management and sustainability* (pp. 1-12). Cambridge, MA: CABI.
- Neumayer, E., & Perkins, R. (2005). Uneven geographies of organizational practice: Explaining the cross-national transfer and diffusion of ISO 9000. *Economic Geography*, 81(3), 237-259.
- Newell, S., & Swan, J. (1995). The diffusion of innovations in sport organizations: An evaluative framework. *Journal of Sport Management*, 9(3), 317-337.
- Newman, P. W. (1999). Sustainability and cities: extending the metabolism model. *Landscape and urban planning*, 44(4), 219-226.
- Nguyen, S. (2018). Environmental certifications of sport facilities and events. In B. P. McCullough & T. B. Kellison (Eds.), *Routledge Handbook of Sport and the Environment* (pp. 220-232). London: Routledge.
- Nite, C. (2016). Message framing as institutional maintenance: the National Collegiate Athletic Association's institutional work of addressing legitimate threats. *Sport Management Review*.
- Nite, C., Ige, A., & Washington, M. (2019). The evolving institutional work of the National Collegiate Athletic Association to maintain dominance in a fragmented field. *Sport Management Review*, 22(3), 379-394.
- North, D. C. (1990). *Institutions, institutional change, and economic performance*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- O'Brien, D., & Chalip, L. (2007). Executive training exercise in sport event leverage. *International Journal of Culture, Tourism and Hospitality Research*, 1(4), 296-304.
- O'Brien, D., & Chalip, L. (2008). Sport event and strategic leveraging: Pushing towards the triple bottom line. In A. Woodside & D. Martin (Eds.), *Advancing tourism management* (pp. 318-338). Cambridge, MA: CABI Publishing.
- O'Brien, D., & Slack, T. (2003). An analysis of change in an organizational field: The professionalization of English rugby union. *Journal of Sport Management*, 17(4), 417-448.
- O'Brien, D., & Slack, T. (2004). The emergence of a professional logic in English rugby union: The role of isomorphic and diffusion processes. *Journal of Sport Management*, 18(1), 13-39.
- Ocasio, W., Thornton, P. H., & Lounsbury, M. (2017). Advances to the institutional logics perspective. *The Sage handbook of organizational institutionalism*, 509-531.
- Oliver, C. (1991). Strategic responses to institutional processes. *Academy of management review*, 16, 145-179.
- Oliver, C. (1992). The antecedents of deinstitutionalization. *Organization Studies*, 13, 563-588.
- Olkkonen, R. (2001). Case study: The network approach to international sport sponsorship arrangement. *Journal of Business and Industrial Marketing*, 16, 309-329.
- Ortmann, G. (2010). On drifting rules and standards. *Scandinavian Journal of Management*, 26(2), 204-214.
- Osborne, A., Sherry, E., & Nicholson, M. (2016). The Delhi dilemma: Media representation of the 2010 Commonwealth Games. *Sport in Society*, 19(2), 201-217.
- Osborne, P. (2014). Gold Coast prepares for Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games Debrief. Retrieved from <https://www.insidethegames.biz/articles/1023048/gold-coast-prepares-for-glasgow-2014-commonwealth-games-debrief>

- Owen, J. G. (2005). Estimating the cost and benefit of hosting Olympic Games: What can Beijing expect from its 2008 Games *The Industrial Geographer*, 3(1), 1-18.
- Page, S. J., & Connell, J. (2012). Introduction. In S. J. Page & J. Connell (Eds.), *The routledge handbook of events* (pp. 1-23). London: Routledge.
- Parent, M. M. (2013). Legacy and sustainability. In *Managing major sports events: Theory and practice* (pp. 286-307). New York: Routledge.
- Parent, M. M., & Deephouse, D. L. (2007). A Case Study of Stakeholder Identification and Prioritization by Managers. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 75(1), 1-23. doi:10.1007/s10551-007-9533-y
- Park, S., & Park, K. (2017). Thematic trends in event management research. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Research*, 29(3), 848-861.
- Parris, T. M., & Kates, R. W. (2003). Characterizing and measuring sustainable development. *Annual Review of environment and resources*, 28(1), 559-586.
- Pelham, F. (2011). Will sustainability change the business model of the event industry? *Worldwide Hospitality and Tourism Themes*, 3(3), 187-192.
- Pentifallo, C., & VanWynsberghe, R. (2012). Blame it on Rio: isomorphism, environmental protection and sustainability in the Olympic Movement. *International Journal of Sport Policy and Politics*, 4(3), 427-446.
- Pentifallo, C., & VanWynsberghe, R. (2015). Mega-event impact assessment and policy attribution: Embedded case study, social housing, and the 2010 Winter Olympic Games. *Journal of Policy Research in Tourism, Leisure and Events*, 7(3), 266-281.
- Pereira, E. C., Mascarenhas, M. V., Flores, A. J., & Pires, G. M. (2015). Nautical small-scale sports events portfolio: A strategic leveraging approach. *European Sport Management Quarterly*, 15(1), 27-47.
- Perkin, H. (1989). Teaching the nations how to play: sport and society in the British empire and Commonwealth. *The International Journal of the History of Sport*, 6(2), 145-155.
- Polit, D., & Beck, C. (2016). *Nursing research: Generating and assessing evidence for nursing practice* (10th ed.). Philadelphia, PA: Lippincott Williams & Wilkins.
- Ponsford, I. F. (2011). Actualizing environmental sustainability at Vancouver 2010 venues. *International Journal of Event and Festival Management*, 2(2), 184-196.
- Positive Impact Events. (2016). *Sustainable events summit: What is corporate event professionals understanding of sustainability?* Paper presented at the Global Sustainable Events Summit, London.
- Powell, M. (2019). Commentary: Gold Coast 2018—the innovative and inclusive Games. *Queensland Review*, 26(1), 156-165.
- Powell, W. W., Oberg, A., Korff, V., Oelberger, C., & Kloos, K. (2017). Institutional analysis in a digital era: Mechanisms and methods to understand emerging fields. In *New Themes in Institutional Analysis*: Edward Elgar Publishing.
- Power, M. (1997). *The audit society: Rituals of verification*. Oxford/New York: Oxford University Press.
- Preuss, H. (2007). The conceptualisation and measurement of mega sport event legacies. *Journal of Sport & Tourism*, 12(3-4), 207-228. doi:10.1080/14775080701736957
- Preuss, H. (2013). The contribution of the FIFA World Cup and the Olympic Games to green economy. *Sustainability*, 5(8), 3581-3600.
- Provan, D. J., Rae, A. J., & Dekker, S. W. (2019). An ethnography of the safety professional's dilemma: Safety work or the safety of work? *Safety science*, 117, 276-289.

- Pye, N., & Thomson, A. (2013). Statement of principles for generating legacy. Retrieved from <https://www.goldcoast.qld.gov.au/documents/bf/comm-games-statement-principles-generating-legacy.pdf>
- Pye, N., Thomson, A., & Kirkpatrick, H. (2013). Assessing legacy: A best practice review. Retrieved from <https://www.goldcoast.qld.gov.au/documents/bf/comm-games-assessing-legacy.pdf>
- Queensland Government. (2016). *Commonwealth Games Arrangements Act 2011*. Retrieved from <https://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/view/pdf/2015-01-01/act-2011-042>.
- Queensland Government. (2017a). *Commonwealth Games Arrangements Regulation 2013*. Retrieved from <https://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/view/pdf/2017-12-22/sl-2013-0044>.
- Queensland Government. (2017b). *Major Events Act 2014*. Retrieved from <https://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/view/pdf/inforce/2017-07-03/act-2014-060>.
- Queensland Government. (2019a). Awarded contracts. Retrieved from <http://qcd.hpw.qld.gov.au/Pages/AwardedContracts.aspx>
- Queensland Government. (2019b). Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games post games report. <https://publications.qld.gov.au/dataset/gold-coast-2018-commonwealth-games-post-games-report>
- Quinn, T. C., & Washington, M. (2009). Maintaining an institution in a contested organizational field: the work of the AA CSB and its constituents. *Institutional work: Actors and agency in institutional studies of organizations*, 236-261.
- Rada, R. (2000). Consensus versus speed. In *Information technology standards and standardization: A global perspective* (pp. 19-34): IGI Global.
- Radulovic, G. (2011). *ISO: 20121 Sustainable Event Management Systems: A guide to understanding the ISO and its public comment engagement period*. Paper presented at the MEA 2011, Brisbane. <http://www.meetingevents.com.au/brisbane/presentation/Radulovic,%20Giselle%20@%20110411%20%5BCompatibility%20Mode%5D.pdf>
- Rao, H., Morrill, C., & Zald, M. N. (2000). Power plays: How social movements and collective action create new organizational forms. *Research in Organizational Behavior*, 22, 239-282.
- Rasche, A. (2010). The limits of corporate responsibility standards. *Business Ethics: A European Review*, 19(3), 280-291.
- Raviola, E., & Norbäck, M. (2013). Bringing technology and meaning into institutional work: Making news at an Italian business newspaper. *Organization Studies*, 34, 1171-1194.
- Redclift, M. (2005). Sustainable development (1987–2005): an oxymoron comes of age. *Sustainable development*, 13(4), 212-227.
- Richardson, N. (2009). Critique of Consumer Marketing within Sustainable Events. In R. Raj & J. Musgrave (Eds.), *Event Management and Sustainability* (pp. 109-118). Cambridge, MA: CABI.
- Ritchie, J. B., & Beliveau, D. (1974). An evaluation of a strategic response to seasonality in the travel market. *Journal of Travel Research*, 12(2), 14-20.
- Ritchie, J. R. B. (1984). Assessing the Impact of Hallmark Events: Conceptual and Research Issues. *Journal of Travel Research*, 23(1), 2-11.
- Roche, M. (1994). Mega-events and urban policy. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 21(1), 1-19.
- Roche, M. (2000). *Mega-events and modernity Olympics and expos in the growth of global culture*. London: Routledge.

- Roche, M. (2017). *Mega-events and social change: Spectacle, legacy and public culture*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- Rodgers, M. (Producer). (2015). Games on! Griffith official partner for GC2018.
- Rogers, E. (2003). *Diffusion of Innovations* (5th ed.). New York: Free Press.
- Rogers, E., & Shoemaker, F. F. (1971). Communication of Innovations; A Cross-Cultural Approach.
- Rojek, C. (2014). Global event management: A critique. *Leisure Studies*, 33(1), 32-47.
- Ross, W. J., Leopkey, B., & Mercado, H. U. (2018). Governance of Olympic Environmental Stakeholders. *Journal of Global Sport Management*, 1-20.
- Samuel, S., & Stubbs, W. (2012). Green Olympics, green legacies? An exploration of the environmental legacies of the Olympic Games. *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, 48(4), 485-504. doi:10.1177/1012690212444576
- Samuel, S., & Stubbs, W. (2013). Green Olympics, green legacies? An exploration of the environmental legacies of the Olympic Games. *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, 48(4), 485-504.
- Sant, S.-L., Mason, D. S., & Hinch, T. D. (2014). Conceptualising Olympic tourism legacy: destination marketing organisations and Vancouver 2010. *Journal of Sport & Tourism*, 18(4), 287-312. doi:10.1080/14775085.2014.947312
- Sarmiento, C. V., & El Hanandeh, A. (2018). Customers' perceptions and expectations of environmentally sustainable restaurant and the development of green index: The case of the Gold Coast, Australia. *Sustainable Production and Consumption*, 15, 16-24.
- Schenk, J., Parent, M. M., MacDonald, D., & Proulx Therrien, L. (2015). The evolution of knowledge management and transfer processes from domestic to international multi-sport events. *European Sport Management Quarterly*, 15(5), 535-554.
- Schmidt, C. W. (2006). Putting the earth in play: environmental awareness and sports. *Environmental Health Perspectives*, 114(5), A286.
- Schüßler, E., Grabher, G., & Müller-Seitz, G. (2015). Field-configuring events: Arenas for innovation and learning? In (pp. 165-172): Taylor & Francis.
- Schüßler, E., Rüling, C.-C., & Wittneben, B. B. (2014). On melting summits: The limitations of field-configuring events as catalysts of change in transnational climate policy. *Academy of Management Journal*, 57(1), 140-171.
- Scott, W. R. (2003). Institutional carriers: reviewing modes of transporting ideas over time and space and considering their consequences. *Industrial and corporate change*, 12(4), 879-894.
- Scott, W. R. (2004). Institutional Theory. In G. Ritzer (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of Social Theory*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Scott, W. R. (2014). *Institutions and organizations: Ideas, interests, and identities*. Sage Publications.
- Seidl, D. (2007). Standard setting and following in corporate governance: An observation-theoretical study of the effectiveness of governance codes. *Organization*, 14(5), 705-727.
- Seifried, C., Katz, M., & Tutka, P. (2017). A conceptual model on the process of innovation diffusion through a historical review of the United States Armed Forces and their bowl games. *Sport Management Review*.
- Seligman, L. (2006). Sensemaking throughout adoption and the innovation-decision process. *European Journal of Innovation Management*, 9(1), 108-120.
- Selznick, P. (1949). *TVA and the Grass Roots*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Selznick, P. (1957). *Leadership in Administration*. New York: Harper and Row.

- Silva, M., & Figueiredo, M. (2017). Sustainability as practice: Reflections on the creation of an institutional logic. *Sustainability*, 9(10), 1839.
- Skinner, J., Edwards, A., & Corbett, B. (2014). *Research methods for sport management*. Nw York: Routledge.
- Slack, T. (1996). From the locker room to the board room: Changing the domain of sport management. *Journal of Sport Management*, 10, 97-105.
- Slack, T., & Hinings, B. (1994). Institutional pressures and isomorphic change: An empirical test. *Organization Studies*, 15(6), 803-827.
- Slager, R., Gond, J.-P., & Moon, J. (2012). Standardization as institutional work: The regulatory power of a responsible investment standard. *Organization Studies*, 33(5-6), 763-790.
- Smith-Christensen, C. (2009). Sustainability as a concept with events. In *Event management and sustainability*. Oxfordshire, UK: CABI.
- Smith, A. (2014). Leveraging sport mega-events: New model or convenient justification? *Journal of Policy Research in Tourism, Leisure and Events*, 6(1), 15-30.
- Solberg, H. A., & Preuss, H. (2007). Major sport events and long-term tourism impacts. *Journal of Sport Management*, 21(2), 213.
- Sroufe, R. (2003). Effects of environmental management systems on environmental management practices and operations. *Production and Operations Management*, 12(3), 416-431.
- Stadiums Queensland. (2018). Who we are. Retrieved from <https://www.stadiums.qld.gov.au/about-us/who-we-are.aspx>
- Stamm, C. B. (2019). ISO 26000 gets taken around: Diffusion work as crucial link between standard creation and adoption. In A. Sales (Ed.), *Corporate social responsibility and corporate change: Institutional and organizational perspectives*. Cham: Springer.
- Stevens, J. (2018). Organizational capacity and sport, the environment, and sustainability: making the case for capacity building. In *Routledge Handbook of Sport and the Environment* (pp. 127-136): Routledge.
- Strang, D., & Meyer, J. W. (1993). Institutional conditions for diffusion. *Theory and society*, 22(4), 487-511.
- Suddaby, R. (2010). Challenges for institutional theory. *Journal of Management Inquiry*, 19(1), 14-20.
- Sustainable Event Alliance. (2019). About the Sustainable Event Alliance. Retrieved from <https://sustainable-event-alliance.org/about-2/>
- Theron, C., & Prevett, L. (2015). The financial drivers for embedding sustainability into a sports organization. In J. M. Casper & M. E. Pfhal (Eds.), *Sport management and the natural environment: Theory and practice* (pp. 171-190). New York: Routledge.
- Thiel, J., & Grabher, G. (2015). Crossing boundaries: Exploring the London Olympics 2012 as a field-configuring event. *Industry and Innovation*, 22(3), 229-249.
- Thomson, A., Cuskelly, G., Toohey, K., Kennelly, M., Burton, P., & Fredline, L. (2019). Sport event legacy: A systematic quantitative review of literature. *Sport Management Review*, 22(3), 295-321.
- Thornton, P. H. (2004). *Markets from culture: Institutional logics and organizational decisions in higher education publishing*: Stanford University Press.
- Thornton, P. H., & Ocasio, W. (1999). Institutional logics and the historical contingency of power in organizations: Executive succession in the higher education publishing industry, 1958–1990. *American journal of Sociology*, 105(3), 801-843.

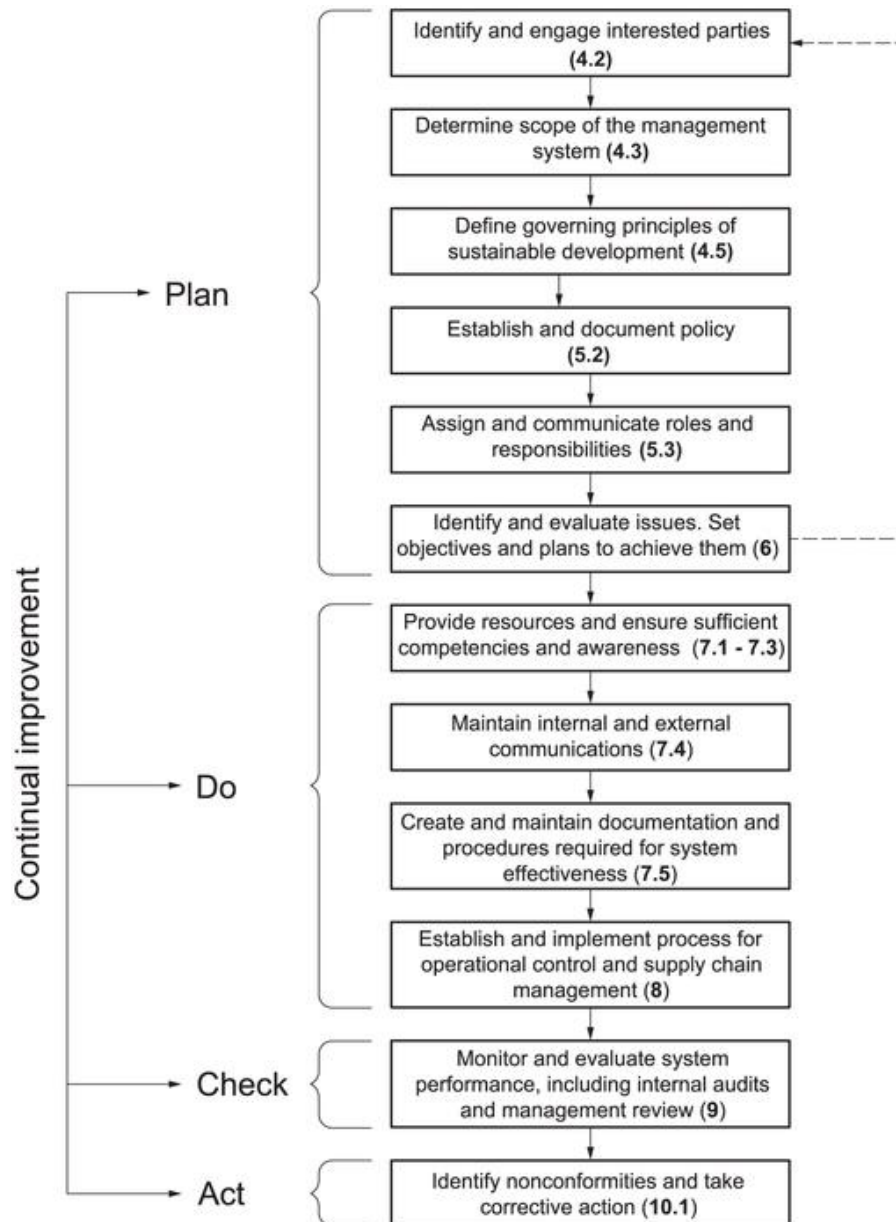


- Thornton, P. H., Ocasio, W., & Lounsbury, M. (2012). *The institutional logics perspective: A new approach to culture, structure, and process*: Oxford University Press on Demand.
- Tinnish, S. M., & Mangal, S. M. (2012). Sustainable event marketing in the MICE industry: A theoretical framework. *Journal of Convention & Event Tourism*, 13, 227-249.
- Tolbert, P., & Zucker, L. (1996). The institutionalization of institutional theory. In Clegg S., Hardy C., & N. W (Eds.), *Handbook of organization studies* (pp. 175-190). London: Sage.
- Toohey, K. (2008). The Sydney Olympics: Striving for legacies—overcoming short-term disappointments and long-term deficiencies. *The International Journal of the History of Sport*, 25(14), 1953-1971.
- Tourism and Event Queensland. (2018). Queensland events guide: Staging your event at the best address on earth.
- Trendafilova, S., Babiak, K., & Heinze, K. (2013). Corporate social responsibility and environmental sustainability: Why professional sport is greening the playing field. *Sport Management Review*, 16(3), 298-313.
- Tuczek, F., Castka, P., & Wakolbinger, T. (2018). A review of management theories in the context of quality, environmental and social responsibility voluntary standards. *Journal of cleaner production*, 176, 399-416.
- Walker, A. S. (2012). Process vs. Performance Standards for Sustainable Meeting and Event Management. Osgoode CLPE Research Paper No. 17/2012. Retrieved from <https://ssrn.com/abstract=2116342>
- Walker, M., Heere, B., Parent, M. M., & Drane, D. (2010). Social responsibility and the Olympic Games: The mediating role of consumer attributions. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 95(4), 659-680.
- Wall, E., Weersink, A., & Swanton, C. (2001). Agriculture and ISO 14000. *Food Policy*, 26(1), 35-48.
- Walsham, G. (1995). Interpretive case studies in IS research: Nature and method. *European Journal of Information Systems*, 4(2), 74-81.
- Washington, M., & Patterson, K. D. (2011). Hostile takeover or joint venture: Connections between institutional theory and sport management research. *Sport Management Review*, 14(1), 1-12.
- Welford, R., & Starkey, R. (2001). *The Earthscan reader in business and sustainable development*: Earthscan.
- Werner, K., Dickson, G., & Hyde, K. F. (2015). Learning and knowledge transfer processes in a mega-events context: The case of the 2011 rugby world cup. *Tourism management*, 48, 174-187.
- Williams, B., Wilmshurst, T., & Clift, R. (2011). Sustainability reporting by local government in Australia: Current and future prospects. *Accounting Forum*, 35(3), 176-186.
- Wood, E. H., Blackwell, R., Bowdin, G., Church, I., Pearson, C., Raj, R., & Tum, J. (2003). *The national survey of small tourism and hospitality firms: Special issue: Small firms in the events sector*. Leeds, UK: Emerald Group Publishing Ltd.
- Wood, S. (2012). The International Organization for Standardization. In D. Reed, P. Utting, & A. M. Reed (Eds.), *Business Regulation and Non-State Actors* (pp. 81-94). New York: Routledge.
- Woolf, J., Berg, B. K., Newland, B. L., & Green, B. C. (2016). So you want to be a fighter: Institutional work and sport development processes at an elite mixed martial arts gym. *Journal of Sport Management*, TBD(TBD), TBD.

- Wooten, M., & Hoffman, A. J. (2017). Organizational fields: Past, present and future. In R. Greenwood, C. Oliver, & B. Thomas (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of organizational institutionalism* (2nd ed., pp. 55-72): SAGE Publications Ltd.
- Yates, J., & Murphy, C. (2006). From setting national standards to coordinating international standards: The formation of the ISO. *Business and Economic History Online*, 4, 1-25.
- Yin, R. K. (2014). *Case study research: Design and methods* (5th ed.). London: Sage.
- Zhu, Q., Tian, Y., & Sarkis, J. (2012). Diffusion of selected green supply chain management practices: an assessment of Chinese enterprises. *Production Planning & Control*, 23(10-11), 837-850.
- Ziakas, V. (2014). Planning and leveraging event portfolios: Towards a holistic theory. *Journal of Hospitality Marketing & Management*, 23(3), 327-356.
- Ziakas, V., & Costa, C. A. (2011). The use of an event portfolio in regional community and tourism development: Creating synergy between sport and cultural events. *Journal of Sport & Tourism*, 16(2), 149-175.
- Zietsma, C., Groenewegen, P., Logue, D. M., & Hinings, C. (2017). Field or fields? Building the scaffolding for cumulation of research on institutional fields. *Academy of Management Annals*, 11(1), 391-450.
- Zietsma, C., & Lawrence, T. B. (2010). Institutional work in the transformation of an organizational field: The interplay of boundary work and practice work. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 55(2), 189-221.
- Zietsma, C., & McKnight, B. (2009). Building the iron cage: institutional creation work in the context of. *Institutional work: Actors and agency in institutional studies of organizations*, 143.
- Zilber, T. (2013). Institutional logics and institutional work: Should they be agreed? In *Institutional Logics in Action, Part A* (pp. 77-96): Emerald Group Publishing Limited.
- Zilber, T. B. (2011). Institutional multiplicity in practice: A tale of two high-tech conferences in Israel. *Organization Science*, 22(6), 1539-1559.

## Appendices

### Appendix A: Framework of ISO 20121



Source: International Organization for Standardization, <https://www.iso.org/obp/ui/#iso:std:iso:20121:ed-1:v1:en>



## **PARTICIPANT INFORMATION DOCUMENT**

Ethics Reference Number: 0000015268

Thank you for your interest in the research project titled **‘The institutionalisation of sustainability in event management: A case study of the diffusion of ISO 20121 at the Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games’**.

The purpose of this document is to fully inform you about this research project; its purpose, requirements, risks and benefits. Please read and understand this document fully and direct any questions to the lead researcher.

My name is Andrew Bakos and I am currently completing a PhD at Bond University under the supervision of Dr. Danny O’Brien and Dr. Lisa Gowthorp.

I am conducting a research investigation into sustainable event management. I am specifically interested in the diffusion of ISO 20121 (event sustainability management systems) through the 2018 Gold Coast Commonwealth Games.

As part of this study, I will invite you to complete a 30 to 60-minute semi-structured interview.

Participation in this study is completely voluntary and you may withdraw at any time without risking any negative consequences. If you choose to withdraw your participation in this study, the information you have provided will be immediately destroyed. All the data collected in this study will be treated with complete confidentiality and not made accessible to any person outside of the three researchers working on this project. The information I obtain from you will be dealt with in a manner that ensures you remain anonymous. Data will be stored in a secured location at Bond University for a period of three years in accordance with the guidelines set out by the Bond University Human Research Ethics Committee.

It is anticipated that the data collected during this study will assist us in understanding the efforts of key actors around the adoption of sustainable practices during the preparation of a major sporting event. Your participation in this study will enhance work towards gaining a perspective of the day-to-day efforts of professionals regarding the adoption of sustainable practices.

If you choose not to participate in this study, there will be no impact on your involvement with the Commonwealth Games.

If you have any further questions in regard to this research, please contact:

**Mr. Andrew Bakos**, Faculty of Health Sciences and Medicine, Bond University  
Telephone: +61 4 1347 0475, e-mail: [andrew.bakos@student.bond.edu.au](mailto:andrew.bakos@student.bond.edu.au)

**Should you have any complaints concerning the manner in which this research is being conducted please make contact with –**

**Bond University Human Research Ethics Committee,  
Bond University Office of Research Services.  
Bond University, Gold Coast, 4229, Australia  
Tel: +61 7 5595 4194 Fax: +61 7 5595 1120 email: [ethics@bond.edu.au](mailto:ethics@bond.edu.au)**

We thank you for taking time to assist us with this research.

Andrew Bakos

## *Appendix C: Participant Consent Form*

### **CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH**

Title of Study: 'The institutionalisation of sustainability in event management: A case study of the diffusion of ISO 20121 at the Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games'.

You are asked to participate in a research study conducted by Andrew Bakos, Dr. Danny O'Brien and Dr. Lisa Gowthorp, who are from the Faculty of Health Sciences and Medicine as part of the PhD thesis that is a requirement of the HDR program at Bond University.

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel to contact Andrew Bakos through e-mail: [andrew.bakos@student.bond.edu.au](mailto:andrew.bakos@student.bond.edu.au) or by phone: 04 1347 0475.

### **PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

The purpose of this study is to examine the work of individual and collective actors responsible for the adoption of sustainable practices leading up to the Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games (GC2018).

### **PROCEDURES**

If you volunteer to participate in this study, you will be asked to complete a 30 to 60-minute semi-structured interview. You will be asked approximately 15 open-ended questions. The interview will be audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim. You may request a copy of the interview to review and ensure its accuracy. If you choose to do so, please respond within two weeks to confirm the accuracy of the document.

### **POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS**

Answering questions within the interviews involve minimal risk, as these questions will not be psychologically harmful. You will be required to answer questions pertaining to sustainability in relation to your organization and the 2018 Gold Coast Commonwealth Games. The questions will be based on personal experience; therefore, personal information may be used if provided. If you feel any discomfort answering any question, you may refuse to answer a particular question or drop out of the study at any time.

### **POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO PARTICIPANTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY**

The knowledge gained through this study may assist future event organizers and other relevant actors in understanding exactly how a sustainability management system, specifically ISO 20121, is implemented and diffused through the staging of a major sporting event

### **COMPENSATION FOR PARTICIPATION**

The participants in this study will not receive compensation for their participation.

## CONFIDENTIALITY

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential. Specifically, only the three primary researcher and two advisors, Dr. O'Brien and Dr. Gowthorp will have access to your information. All data will be kept secure on the researcher's personal laptop for three years. No personal information will be published or presented.

## PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

Please sign this consent form to state that you are willing to participate in this study. You do not have to answer any question if you do not feel comfortable doing so. Also, you may withdraw from this study at any time by notifying the researcher of your decision. If you do decide to withdraw from this study, the information that you have provided will be not be used in the study

## FEEDBACK OF THE RESULTS OF THIS STUDY TO THE PARTICIPANTS

Upon the conclusion of the study, you may be emailed a summary of the findings.

## SUBSEQUENT USE OF DATA

This data may be used in subsequent studies, in publications and in presentations.

## RIGHTS OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

If you have questions regarding your rights as a research participant, contact:

**Bond University Human Research Ethics Committee,  
Bond University Office of Research Services.  
Bond University, Gold Coast, 4229, Australia  
Tel: +61 7 5595 4194 Fax: +61 7 5595 1120 email: [ethics@bond.edu.au](mailto:ethics@bond.edu.au)**

#### SIGNATURE OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANT/LEGAL REPRESENTATIVE

I understand the information provided for the study 'The institutionalisation of sustainability in event management: A case study of the diffusion of ISO 20121 at the Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games' as described herein. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I agree to participate in this study. I have been given a copy of this form.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Participant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Participant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

#### SIGNATURE OF RESEARCHER

These are the terms under which I will conduct research.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Researcher

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## *Appendix D: Semi-Structured Interview Guide*

### **Section One – Introduction and Orientation**

- Researcher introduces himself
- Researcher's aim
  - Develop an understanding of sustainable event management related to GC2018, with a specific focus on ISO 20121.
- Researcher's Objectives
  - Understand the participant's perceptions and experiences with ISO 20121.
- The interview process
  - You have been identified as a participant of this study due **to (a) your involvement with GC2018** and/or **(b) your experience with ISO 20121**.
  - Semi-structured interview with 10-15 core questions. Other questions may arise based on your response.
  - The interview will last approximately 30-60 minutes.
  - The interview will be audio-recorded and transcribed. You may request a copy of the transcription to review and ensure its accuracy.
  - Your name will not be included in any publications or presentations that may result from this research as your confidentiality is important.

### **Section Two – Background Information**

- 1) Could you tell me about your organisation's involvement with the upcoming Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games?
- 2) What is your role at \_\_\_\_\_ ?

### **Section Three – Sustainability/ISO 20121 Questions**

- 3) How would you define sustainability as it relates to event management?
- 4) Prior to working for \_\_\_\_\_, did you have any other experiences related to sustainability and the adoption of sustainable practices?
- 5) Do you have any experience with ISO 20121?
  - How did you first learn about the standard?
  - What were your initial thoughts about the standard?

- 6) Did your organization choose to adopt ISO 20121?
- If yes, ask questions 7-13
  - If no, ask questions 14 and 15
- 7) Why did your organization choose to adopt ISO 20121?
- 8) What role did/do you play in the implementation of the standard?
- 9) How did you implement the activities and processes for ISO 20121?
- 10) Has the standard helped integrate sustainability into the day-to-day operations of your organization? If so, how?
- Please cite a specific example.
- 11) Where are you currently in relation to certification?
- 12) Can you tell me about any barriers you've experienced with implementation and/or certification of the standard?
- 13) What recommendations would you give to other organisations who are looking to implement ISO 20121?
- 14) Which of the following best describes your organisation's decision for not implementing ISO 20121 (not limited to one):
- Lack of awareness/understanding of the standard
  - It was not a requirement for GC2018
  - Certification is too expensive
  - Do not have the human resources to carry out implementation
  - Does not fit your organisation
  - Other reason
- 15) Would your organisation implement ISO 20121 there was a programme to assist you with implementation through GC2018?

**Section Four – Other Information/Snowball Sampling**

- 16) Is there anything else you would like to add concerning ISO 20121 and sustainability in relation to your organization or GC2018?
- 17) Can you recommend anyone else that would be knowledgeable in regard to ISO 20121, sustainability and GC2018?

## *Appendix E: Final Coding Template*

### 1) GC2018 Organizational Field Boundaries

- a. Spatial
- b. Temporal
- c. Governance

### 2) Diffusion Actors of ISO 20121

- a. ISO
- b. CGF
- c. GCCBC
- d. Governments
  - i. Federal
  - ii. State
  - iii. Local
- e. Industry Associations
- f. GOLDOC
- g. Consultants
- h. Universities/Researchers

### 3) Diffusion Work

- a. Concrete
  - i. Organisational Documents
  - ii. Presentations
  - iii. Consultation
  - iv. Interview
- b. Broad
  - i. Organisational Documents
  - ii. Organisational Website
  - iii. Working Group
  - iv. Presentations
- c. Selective
  - i. Organisational Documents
  - ii. Working Group
  - iii. Presentations



- d. Conceptual
  - i. Organisational Documents
  - ii. Organisational Policies
  - iii. Organisational Website
  - iv. Presentations
- 4) Innovation Decision Process
  - a. Knowledge
    - i. Acquaintance with ISO 20121
      - 1. GOLDOC
        - a. SEWG
      - 2. Online Multimedia
      - 3. Sustainable Tourism Advisory Group
      - 4. Previous Experience with ISO Standards
    - ii. Comprehension of ISO 20121
      - 1. Environmental Event Management System
      - 2. Sustainable Event Management System
    - iii.
  - b. Persuasion
    - i. Relative Advantage
    - ii. Compatibility
    - iii. Trialability
    - iv. Ease of Adoption
    - v. Observability
  - c. Decision
    - i. Active Rejection
    - ii. Passive Rejection
    - iii. Full Adoption
    - iv. Re-Invention
  - d. Implementation